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ABSTRACT

In 1991, the Florida State Legislature created "Blueprint 2000," a plan for school improvement and accountability. This handbook presents findings of an evaluation conducted by the Office of Program Policy and Government Accountability (OPPAGA), which gathered information about the improvement initiatives that schools implemented, the impact of Blueprint 2000 on students, the involvement of stakeholders, the allocation of financial resources, the delegation of decision making, and school advisory council (SAC) membership. Data were gathered through a survey of 331 teachers and 196 principals across the state; a review of the school-improvement plans of 39 schools in 15 school districts; visits to 19 schools in 5 districts; and a review of school-advisory-council information from 65 schools for the years 1993-94, 1994-95, and 1995-96. Findings indicate that virtually all school-improvement plans included goals and initiatives to improve student performance. Most stakeholders needed assistance in evaluating initiatives and determining the effect of factors such as student mobility. Stakeholders believed that Blueprint 2000 had increased parent involvement in the school-improvement process, but that it had not significantly affected either the allocation of financial resources or school-based decision making. School employees continued to dominate the membership of school advisory councils, and one-third of the councils did not reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of their schools. The report recommends that the state legislature amend state law regarding requirements for advisory council membership; that the Commission on Education Reform and Accountability work with various groups to ensure that SACs meet membership requirements and stakeholders receive assistance; and that the Department of Education provide training and assistance in evaluation, long-term planning, and Blueprint 2000 requirements. Seventeen exhibits are included. Appendices contain stakeholders' perceptions, data on advisory council membership, and responses of the Florida Department of Education and the Florida Commission on Education Reform and Accountability. The supplementary report provides indepth information for 5 school districts (Alachua, Monroe, Orange, Sarasota, and Washington) and 19 schools within those districts. Data were gathered through onsite visits; interviews with school board members, district administrators and staff, principals, teachers, and school advisory council chairs; and focus groups held with teachers and advisory councils. The district and school profiles contain specific information about the implementation and impact of Blueprint 2000. Preceding each school profile is district background information; a summary of the district's Blueprint 2000 implementation efforts and effects on the students, teachers, and school administration; and highlights of various school-improvement initiatives. The school profiles provide information about the school-improvement process, stakeholder perceptions of that process, school-improvement plans, and examples of school-improvement initiatives. (LMI)

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REPORT NO. 95-53

THE FLORIDA LEGISLATURE

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OFFICE OF PROGRAM POLICY ANALYSIS AND GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

REVIEW
OF
THE IMPLEMENTATION AND IMPACT OF BLUEPRINT 2000
ADMINISTERED BY THE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

April 30, 1996

EA 028 343

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The Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability was established by the 1994 Florida Legislature to play a major role in reviewing the performance of state agencies under performance-based budgeting and to increase the visibility and usefulness of performance audits. The Office was staffed by transferring the Program Audit Division staff of the Auditor General's Office to the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability. The Office is a unit of the Office of the Auditor General but operates independently and reports to the Legislature.

This Office conducts studies and issues a variety of reports, such as policy analyses, justification reviews, program evaluations, and performance audits. These reports provide in-depth analyses of individual state programs and functions. Reports may focus on a wide variety of issues, such as:

- Whether a program is effectively serving its intended purpose;
- Whether a program is operating within current revenue resources;
- Goals, objectives, and performance measures used to monitor and report program accomplishments;
- Structure and design of a program to accomplish its goals and objectives; and
- Alternative methods of providing program services or products.

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The Florida Legislature

OFFICE OF PROGRAM POLICY ANALYSIS AND GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

John W. Turcotte
Director

April 30, 1996

The President of the Senate,
the Speaker of the House of Representatives,
and the Legislative Auditing Committee

I have directed that a review be made of the Implementation and Impact of Blueprint 2000. The results of the review are presented to you in this report. This review was made as a part of an ongoing program of performance auditing by the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability.

We wish to express our appreciation to the staff of the five districts we visited and the staff of the Department of Education for their assistance.

Respectfully yours,

John W. Turcotte
Director

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Report Abstract

We determined that:

- Virtually all school improvement plans OPPAGA reviewed include goals and initiatives to improve student performance, state education goal 3 (refer to pages 6-14).
- While most stakeholders report they are beginning to see improvements, particularly in student performance, they need assistance evaluating initiatives and determining the effect of factors such as student mobility (refer to pages 15-20 and 23-25).[1]
- Stakeholders believe that Blueprint 2000 has increased the involvement of parents and others in the school improvement process but has not significantly affected either the allocation of financial resources or school-based decision making (refer to pages 20-23).
- School advisory council (SAC) membership problems have not improved since 1993-94. Almost half of the SACs still do not include all required stakeholder groups with school employees still dominating about two-thirds of SACs. The membership of about one-third of SACs is not reflective of the ethnic and racial diversity of their schools (refer to pages 27-37).

We recommend that:

- The Legislature amend Florida law regarding school advisory council membership requirements; the Commission on Education Reform and Accountability work with various groups to ensure SACs meet membership requirements and stakeholders receive needed assistance; and the Department of Education provide training and assistance in evaluation, long-term planning, and Blueprint 2000 requirements (refer to pages 40-43).

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[1] Stakeholders are students, parents, teachers, administrators, and all other concerned citizens.

Review of The Implementation And Impact of Blueprint 2000

CHAPTER I

Scope, Introduction, and Methodology

Scope

OPPAGA reviewed the implementation and impact of Florida's education reform initiative known as "Blueprint 2000" and developed information about:

- The improvement initiatives schools are implementing;
- The impact of Blueprint 2000 on students, the involvement of stakeholders in the school improvement process, the allocation of financial resources, and the delegation of decision-making; and
- School advisory council membership.

This is the third in a series of OPPAGA reports about the implementation of Blueprint 2000. This review was made in accordance with generally accepted standards and accordingly included appropriate performance auditing and evaluation methods. In a separate report, we provide supplementary information on the implementation and impact of school improvement initiatives and school improvement plans in each of five school districts and 19 schools we visited as part of this study. [2]

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[2] Report 95-54 provides additional information on the implementation and impact of Blueprint 2000 in the 19 schools visited as part of this review. In February 1994, the Office of the Auditor General published four reports pertaining to Blueprint 2000: Report Nos, 12243, 12244, 12245, and 12246. These four reports are based on fieldwork conducted during the 1993-94 school year and review the implementation of Blueprint 2000 by state agencies and in five selected school districts. In addition, in October 1994, the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability published two reports that focus on the mid-year review process of five additional school districts and 22 schools during the 1993-94 school year.

Introduction

The number of school-aged children in Florida increased by 13% from 1.9 million in 1990-91 to 2.1 million in 1994-95. Of the state's 67 school districts, 62 districts reported student increases. The Legislature recognizes that the children and youth of the state are its future and a valuable resource. The Legislature intends that, by the year 2000, Florida will establish a system of school improvement and educational accountability based on the performance of students and educational programs. In 1991, the Legislature created Florida's system for school improvement and accountability, referred to as "Blueprint 2000." A cornerstone provision of Blueprint 2000 is to return responsibility to those closest to the students, that is, the schools, teachers, and parents.

Blueprint 2000 requires the State Board of Education to adopt rules necessary to implement a state system of school improvement and accountability and to set standards for gauging progress. The Legislature created the Florida Commission on Education Reform and Accountability to oversee the establishment and implementation of Blueprint 2000 from pre-kindergarten through 12th grade. To facilitate implementation, the Legislature authorized the Department of Education to make procedural changes necessary to implement educational accountability and school improvement policies. The Legislature also assigned the Department of Education the responsibility for training and assisting school districts and schools. State law requires district school boards to maintain a system of school improvement and educational accountability, with superintendents provided the authority to recommend procedures for implementing and maintaining this system. Individual schools are the units of educational accountability. Local school advisory councils assist schools by aiding in the preparation and evaluation of school improvement plans.

On October 6, 1992, the State Board of Education adopted an enacting rule after approving the Blueprint 2000 document developed by the Florida Commission on Education Reform and Accountability. As Blueprint 2000 evolved, the Board revised the Blueprint 2000 document, most recently on June 27, 1995. The revised document identifies expected outcomes and standards for the state's seven education goals. [3] The Commission's Blueprint document also describes five components: (1) performance standards and outcomes; (2) assessment; (3) adequate progress; (4) public reporting; (5) rewards, incentives, and action guidelines (which includes a process for waiver of requirements). As the system moves into its fifth year, the Board approved an assessment design for student performance using criterion-referenced testing and set a time line for development and approval of assessments of the other six state education goals.

In 1995-96, the Florida Commission on Education Reform and Accountability reports that it will concentrate on areas of continuing concern: (1) assessment for all goal areas; (2) oversight of implementation strategies; (3) access for all schools' technological innovations in instruction, management, and communications; (4) postsecondary articulation; and (5) ongoing review of state statutes. As required by statute, the system will continue to undergo annual review and revision.

The Department of Education reports that it took steps to facilitate the implementation of Blueprint 2000. For example, the Department streamlined regulatory functions and contracting positions, trained and assisted stakeholders in understanding and implementing Blueprint 2000, and developed a centralized process to approve requests to waive specific statutory requirements.

At the local level, school boards have been involved in varying degrees with implementation. For example, some school board members reported they read school improvement plans or attend meetings of local school advisory councils while other members delegate these responsibilities to district administrators. School districts also established entities to facilitate implementation, such as district-level school improvement teams, advisory councils, facilitators, "buddies," and central facilitating teams. Some districts created area/regional facilitating teams, provided stakeholder training and technical assistance, published monthly newsletters relating to school improvement, or selected various school improvement models. Schools created school advisory councils comprised of local stakeholders. Schools, with the input of school advisory councils, have developed school improvement plans describing ways schools will attempt to achieve the state's seven education goals.

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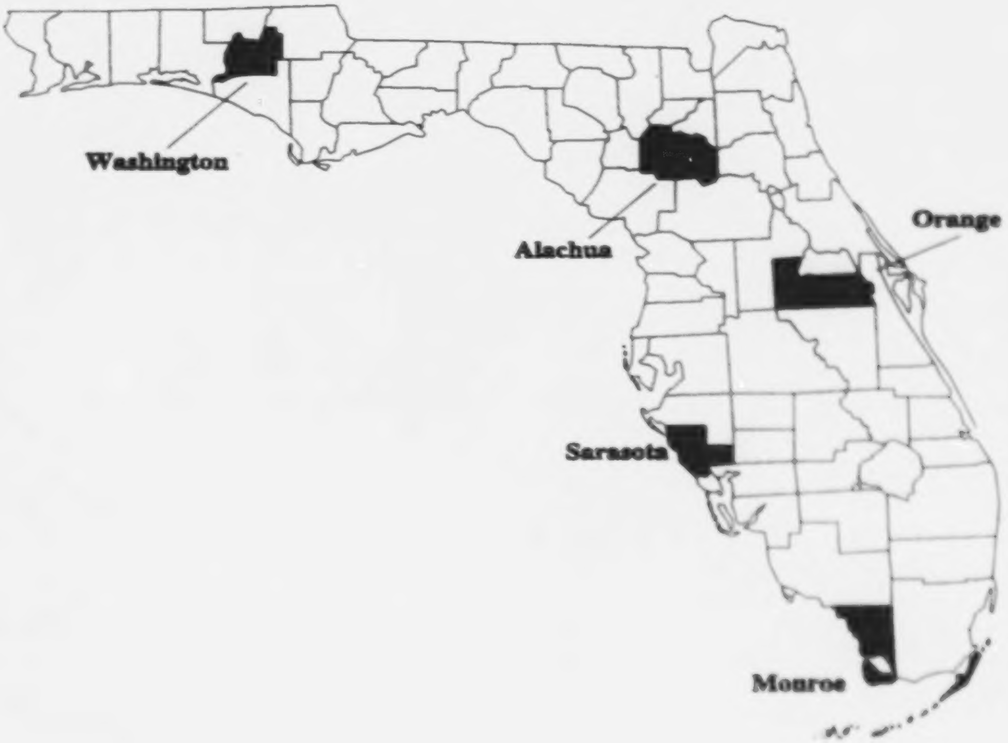
[3] The seven state education goals are: readiness to start school; graduation rate and readiness for postsecondary education and employment; student performance; learning environment; school safety and environment; teachers and staff; and adult literacy.

Methodology

To assess the implementation and impact of Blueprint 2000, OPPAGA surveyed a sample of 331 teachers and 196 principals statewide. We also reviewed goals, objectives, and strategies included in 1994-95 school improvement plans from a sample of 39 schools in 15 school districts. To obtain data on the impact of school improvement initiatives, OPPAGA visited 19 schools in 5 school districts: Alachua, Monroe, Sarasota, Orange, and Washington to speak to stakeholders. (See Exhibit 1 for the location of the districts.) As a follow-up to previous OPPAGA findings about school advisory council membership, we collected council-related information from 65 schools in 15 school districts for 1993-94, 1994-95, and 1995-96 school years.

Exhibit 1
School Districts Visited


Washington
Alachua
Orange
Sarasota
Monroe

Source: Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability.

CHAPTER II School Improvement Initiatives

Section 229.591(3), F.S, establishes seven state education goals as a framework for school improvement initiatives of individual schools. School advisory councils assist schools with the implementation of Blueprint 2000 by aiding in the preparation and evaluation of school improvement plans that address these goals. The goals schools include in their school improvement plans reflect the particular needs of the schools. To identify areas that schools are trying to improve, OPPAGA reviewed the 1994-95 school improvement plans from 39 schools. To identify trends in the focus of plans, we also reviewed the school improvement plans of 28 of these 39 schools over three years, 1993-94, 1994-95, and 1995-96. To obtain more detailed information on the improvement initiatives schools are implementing, we visited 19 schools in 5 school districts (Alachua, Monroe, Orange, Sarasota, and Washington) to speak administrators, teachers, school advisory council members, and others involved in the school improvement process.

Summary Statement

All but 1 of the 39 schools OPPAGA reviewed included goals to improve student performance in their 1994-95 school improvement plans. Over time, school improvement plans are becoming more focused in terms of the number of improvement initiatives that schools are implementing simultaneously. For example, the average number of initiatives included in plans decreased from 32 in 1993-94 to 27 in 1995-96. Focusing on implementing fewer initiatives at the same time enables schools to set priorities for directing limited resources, such as time and funds, to activities that will most likely help them improve. Stakeholders, such as principals, teachers, and parents, at the 19 schools we visited identified over 200 initiatives they are currently implementing to improve relative to the state's education goals. Furthermore, every school we visited is implementing initiatives to improve student performance, state education goal 3. Overall, 44% of the initiatives stakeholders identified are designed to improve the performance of students.

School Improvement Plans

OPPAGA reviewed the 1994-95 school improvement plans of the 19 schools we visited and the plans of 20 other schools we visited in earlier reviews and found that virtually all (38 of 39) school improvement plans include State Education Goal 3, Student Performance. However, schools vary with respect to other state education goals included in their school improvement plans. The fewest number of plans include state education goals related to adult literacy (State Education Goal 7) and readiness to start school (State Education Goal 1). (See Exhibit 2.)

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Exhibit 2
School Improvement Plans for 1994-95 Most Often Focus on Improving Student Performance

State Education Goal	Number of Plans (n=39)
Student Performance *(Goal 3)*	38
Teachers and Staff *(Goal 6)*	28
Learning Environment *(Goal 4)*	25
School Safety and Environment *(Goal 5)*	24
Graduation Rate and Readiness for Postsecondary Education and Employment *(Goal 2)*	22
Adult Literacy *(Goal 7)*	21
Readiness to Start School *(Goal 1)*	17

Source: Developed by the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability.

While the average number of state education goals included in plans has remained relatively constant over time, schools are implementing fewer initiatives simultaneously to improve relative to these goals. Focusing on implementing fewer initiatives at the same time enables schools to set priorities for directing resources, such as time and funds, to those activities that will help them improve. To identify trends, OPPAGA reviewed the school improvement plans of 28 of the 39 schools for 1993-94, 1994-95, and 1995-96. For each year reviewed, school improvement plans contain an average of four state education goals. However, the average number of initiatives included in school improvement plans decreased from 32 in 1993-94 to 27 in 1995-96. (See Exhibit 3.)

Exhibit 3
Over Time, School Improvement Plans Reviewed Include Fewer Improvement Initiatives

School Year	Total Number of Initiatives in 28 School Improvement Plans Reviewed by OPPAGA	Average Number of Initiatives Per School Improvement Plan
1993-94	903	32
1994-95	826	30
1995-96	751	27

Note: Totals reflect the number of initiatives included in school improvement plans. In some cases, however, schools are implementing particular initiatives to improve in more than one goal area.

Source: Developed by the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability.

The proportion of initiatives addressing particular state education goals is generally consistent with goals included in school improvement plans. Schools directed almost half of the initiatives toward improving student performance (state education goal 3). Over the three-year period, school improvement plans consistently include the fewest number of initiatives to improve adult literacy. Even though the number of total initiatives has decreased since 1993-94, the proportion of initiatives addressing particular state education goals has remained about the same over the three-year period. (See Exhibit 4.) Common initiatives contained in plans for all three years include implementing specific academic programs, curriculum changes, academic incentives such as special recognition programs or awards, teacher training, parental and community involvement activities, publications and information dissemination, fund raising, and planning and exploring.

Exhibit 4
Initiatives Included In School Improvement Plans Reviewed Continue to Concentrate On Student Performance

	Initiatives Included in 28 School Improvement Plans Reviewed:					
	1993-94		1994-95		1995-96	
State Education Goal	**Number**	**Percent**	**Number**	**Percent**	**Number**	**Percent**
Student Performance *(Goal 3)*	402	45%	342	41%	355	47%
Learning Environment *(Goal 4)*	169	19%	150	18%	117	16%
School Safety and Environment *(Goal 5)*	122	14%	165	20%	98	13%
Teachers and Staff *(Goal 6)*	100	11%	84	10%	102	14%
Graduation Rate and Readiness for Postsecondary Education and Employment *(Goal 2)*	94	10%	65	8%	88	12%
Readiness to Start School *(Goal 1)*	75	8%	82	10%	28	4%
Adult Literacy *(Goal 7)*	44	5%	46	6%	46	6%

Note: In some cases schools are implementing particular initiatives to improve in more than one goal area. Thus, percentages do not total to 100%.

Source: Developed by the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability based on reviews of school improvement plans.

School Improvement Initiatives At 19 Schools Visited

To obtain additional information about the improvement initiatives schools are currently implementing, OPPAGA spoke with stakeholders at 19 schools. These stakeholders identified a total of 203 initiatives they are implementing relative to the state education goals. While these initiatives address all seven state education goals, approximately 44% (89 of 203) of these initiatives are aimed at improving student performance. Furthermore, stakeholders at all 19 schools described initiatives their schools are implementing to improve student performance. These initiatives include scheduling changes, homework clubs, increasing student use of technology, and teaming students of different ages and abilities.

Stakeholders often described initiatives in other areas such as education goal 5, school safety. For example, schools are developing conflict resolution programs, communicating discipline policies to students more clearly, improving the lighting on school campus, and adding fences to protect students from on-coming traffic. Fourteen of the 19 schools are implementing initiatives designed to increase parental involvement in school activities. Stakeholders also described initiatives aimed at improving readiness to start school, graduation rate and readiness for postsecondary education and employment, learning environment, teachers and staff, and adult literacy. Exhibit 5 provides information on examples of school improvement initiatives stakeholders identified, and Exhibit 6 highlights a few of these initiatives. In a separate report, we provide specific, detailed information about many of these initiatives. [4]

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[4] Refer to Report 95-54, *Supplementary Information on the Implementation and Impact of Blueprint 2000 in Five School Districts and Nineteen Schools Evaluated.*

Exhibit 5
Stakeholders at 19 Schools Identified Over 200 School Improvement Initiatives With 44% Aimed At Improving Student Performance

State Education Goal	Number of Schools With Such Initiatives (n=19)	Number of Such Initiatives (n=203)
Readiness to Start School *Examples of initiatives:* *Elementary school outreach program to day care centers* *Letters to parents prior to the start of school* *Student retreats during summer prior to start of school* *Coordination between middle and elementary schools*	8	12
Graduation Rate and Readiness for Postsecondary Education and Employment *Examples of initiatives:* *Use of computer program for students to learn about careers* *Develop student career planners* *Partnerships with area businesses*	11	22
Student Performance *Examples of initiatives:* *Homework clubs/lunchtime tutorials/after school reading* *Local author works with students* *Integration of curriculum* *Add computers for students* *Team students of different ages and abilities to increase critical thinking and problem solving skills of students* *Team teaching* *Block scheduling*	19	89
Learning Environment *Examples of initiatives:* *Renovate school facilities* *Clean up school grounds* *Specialized program to promote positive school climate*	8	12
School Safety and Environment *Examples of initiatives:* *Build fence to protect children from traffic* *Improve nighttime lighting of school* *Provide discipline policy to students;* *Conflict resolution programs*	14	32
Teachers and Staff *Examples of initiatives:* *Critical thinking skills training for teachers* *Computer training for teachers*	8	8
Adult Literacy *Examples of initiatives:* *Increased availability of school for adult students* *Adult literacy program*	2	2
Other (Parent Involvement) *Examples of initiatives:* *Home phone system for parents to call* *Increase parent attendance at student fairs and festivals* *Parent nights/open house for community members* *Parent volunteers for projects such as orientation*	14	26

Source: Developed by the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability based on interviews and discussions with stakeholders at 19 schools.

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Exhibit 6
Examples of School Improvement Initiatives Identified by Stakeholders in Five School Districts Visited

The SPECTRUM Program was created at **Fruitville Elementary School in Sarasota County** to teach students how to learn, get along and work cooperatively, make good decisions, and become active learners. Students ages 5-12 participate in the SPECTRUM Program upon parental request; as of September 1995, approximately 120 of 700 children attending the school were enrolled in SPECTRUM. Children of differing ages and abilities enrolled in the program either work alone or in groups to complete classroom assignments. The program is built upon the concept that younger students will learn from older ones and older students will reinforce their own skills by helping younger ones. The program uses work in progress and samples of student work to determine the progress of students. The program uses a six level report card that evaluates children on citizenship, study habits/effort, mathematics, social studies, science, writing, and reading and includes a student self evaluation. Each level includes expected performance measures. Administrators indicate that participating students' reading, writing, and math skills have improved.

As part of its overall efforts to improve student performance, **Vernon High School in Washington County** initiated block scheduling in 1990. The block scheduling model is set up so that each Monday is a 6-period day used to introduce the study topics and projected assignments for the week. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, there are three 100-minute blocks for three classes. On Wednesdays and Fridays, there are also three 100-minute blocks for another three classes. The extended periods were designed to enable teachers to have more time to provide in-depth instruction. Under block scheduling students have an opportunity to concentrate on fewer subjects at one time and to engage in projects and activities for extended periods of time with fewer interruptions. Administrators indicate that student grades have increased, discipline referrals have decreased, and teacher morale has improved as a result of block scheduling.

Howard Bishop Middle School in Alachua County implemented an orientation camp for incoming 6th grade students designed to help these students make a smooth transition from elementary to middle school. The program, Bishop Leaders Attaining Zeal In Education (BLAZE), includes a four-day camp to help students to: (1) become acquainted with other students, teachers, and staff; (2) become familiar with the campus and routine; (3) build self-esteem; (4) learn stress management; (5) develop communication skills; (6) develop decision-making skills; and (7) develop cooperation skills. Participation in the camp has grown significantly from 50 students in 1991 to over 300 students in 1995. Teachers indicate that at the beginning of the school year participating students are more enthusiastic and less fearful than in the past.

Grand Avenue Elementary School in Orange County is involved in activities to increase the technological skills of students and teachers. Grand Avenue received district funds to purchase equipment such as VCR's, CD-ROM players, CD-ROM's, still-video cameras, satellite receivers, video-disc players, computers, and projectors. This equipment enables teachers to supplement instruction and bring learning opportunities to children they might not have experienced otherwise. Grand Avenue has a television studio and radio station that provides students many technological learning experiences, e.g., broadcasting school events to homes within a two-mile radius of the school. The school also conducts parent computer skills practice sessions where students assists their parents in learning more about computers. Students produce a daily morning announcement program, operating cameras and other equipment with little assistance or supervision. Teachers report that student computer and technological skills have improved as a result of these initiatives.

Horace O'Bryant Middle School (HOB) in Monroe County is attempting to increase the career awareness of its students. The objective of the HOB Career Readiness Program is to ensure that every student by the end of the 8th grade takes some definite steps in career exploration, as evidenced by completion of a career planner. The Career Resource Center contains a computerized career guidance program and career videos, in addition to printed materials. On Career Day, January 19, 1995, there were 30 career booths and 45 volunteer community members providing career information. Students of all grade levels heard presentations on career opportunities from various guest speakers. Personnel from the USS Key West provided career information and adopted HOB as their community service project. Business education is an option to 8th graders through the exploratory wheel series of courses; about 85 students enrolled in 1995. In addition, 372 students participated in the Technology Lab during the 1994-95 school year. Teachers indicate that student interest in careers has increased as a result of this program.

Source: Compiled by the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability based on information obtained through site visits.

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Conclusions

Over time, school improvement plans of the 28 schools OPPAGA reviewed are becoming more focused in terms of the number of improvement initiatives that schools are implementing simultaneously. Focusing on implementing fewer initiatives at the same time enables schools to set priorities for directing resources, such as time and funds, to those activities that will help them improve. Stakeholders in 19 schools identified over 200 initiatives they are currently implementing to improve relative to the state's education goals provided in state law. Every school visited is implementing initiatives to improve student performance, state education goal 3.

CHAPTER III Impact of Blueprint 2000

Blueprint 2000 was created to improve the performance of students and educational programs by returning the responsibility to those closest to the students, that is, the schools, teachers, and parents. Thus, while the overall purpose of Blueprint 2000 is to improve the performance of students, the process of shifting responsibility for improvement to local communities may affect other areas such as involvement of stakeholders in the school improvement process, the allocation of financial resources, or decision-making at the local level. To determine the effect of Blueprint 2000, OPPAGA surveyed principals and teachers statewide and visited 19 schools in Alachua, Monroe, Orange, Sarasota, and Washington to speak with stakeholders.

Impact on Students

Summary Statement

Stakeholders report that they are beginning to see improvements especially in student performance. Approximately 71% of teachers and 88% of principals OPPAGA surveyed statewide believe that student performance has improved as a result of the initiatives their schools are implementing under Blueprint 2000. Information such as test scores, disciplinary actions, and survey results is available to document about one-half of the improvements we reviewed. Stakeholder difficulty with evaluation of outcomes is a widespread problem. For example, over one-half of the school improvement plans reviewed are unclear in describing how schools will evaluate the impact of improvement initiatives. Schools need assistance in developing better methods to determine the overall impact of their initiatives.

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Perceived Impact of School Improvement Initiatives.

Statewide, teachers and principals OPPAGA surveyed believe that by implementing various school improvement initiatives their schools are making improvements relative to the seven state education goal areas. Although teachers and principals believe their schools are making improvements related to all seven state education goals, they most often said they were improving student performance. Approximately, 71% of teachers (236 of 331) and 88% of principals (172 of 196) surveyed statewide said that student performance improved at their schools as a result of the school improvement initiatives they are implementing under Blueprint 2000. Exhibit 7 provides responses of teachers and principals by state education goal.

Exhibit 7
Teachers and Principals Surveyed Believe Their Schools Are Making Improvements Particularly in Student Performance

	Percentage of Respondents Who Identified At Least One Improvement In This Goal Area	
State Education Goal	**Teachers (n=331)**	**Principals (n=196)**
Student Performance *(Goal 3)*	71%	88%
Learning Environment *(Goal 4)*	67%	54%
Graduation Rate and Readiness for Postsecondary Education and Employment *(Goal 2)*	34%	19%
School Safety and Environment *(Goal 5)*	33%	34%
Teachers and Staff *(Goal 6)*	31%	33%
Readiness to Start School *(Goal 1)*	16%	14%
Adult Literacy *(Goal 7)*	10%	12%

Note: Respondents identified up to three improvements. Some improvements related to more than one state education goal area. Thus, percentages do not add up to 100.

Source: Compiled by the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability based on survey responses.

Documentation of School Improvements

Stakeholders at the 19 schools OPPAGA visited provided evidence to document about half of the improvements we reviewed. We asked stakeholders to identify improvements their schools made over the past two years and to provide documentation for 58 of these improvements. Stakeholders provided data to document 53% of these improvements (31 of the 58). For instance, one school implementing initiatives to improve students' writing skills showed that the percentage of students scoring three or above on the Florida Writes Test rose from 42% in 1994 to 48% in 1995. In another district, stakeholders reported that the percentages of students with grade point averages of at least 3.0 rose 5% each quarter since the implementation of their strategies to improve students' overall academic performance. Other schools provided parent/survey data, standardized tests scores, attendance records, kindergarten readiness screening assessments, discipline records, and pre/post testing results. For 11 of 58 improvements reviewed, stakeholders reported that individual teacher observation or anecdotal information is available to show improvement. Stakeholders provided little or no evidence to document the remaining 16 improvements reviewed. (See Exhibit 8.)

Exhibit 8
Data Was Available to Document
53% of the Improvements Reviewed

		Number of Improvements For Which Stakeholders Provided:		
Districts	Total Improvements Reviewed	Documentary Evidence	Teacher Observation/ Anecdotal Information	No Evidence
Alachua	14	11	3	0
Monroe	9	3	1	5
Orange	12	3	4	5
Sarasota	11	8	1	2
Washington	12	6	2	4
Total	58	31	11	16

Source: Developed by the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability based on discussions with stakeholders at 19 schools in 5 school districts.

However, it may be too early for schools to document the full impact for 15 of 58 of the improvements. The impacts of these initiatives, such as increases in test scores or employment rates of students after graduation, may be seen over a long term rather than immediately. For example, one high school was in the first year of implementing scheduling changes to improve the students' learning ability by increasing instructional time and allowing students to concentrate on fewer subjects at one time. Teachers, SAC members, administrators, and others at the school believe that data demonstrating the impact of these changes will be available in the future. In addition, some schools are implementing initiatives to make improvements in areas such as critical thinking and problem solving skills or to better prepare students for postsecondary education and employment.

Evaluation of School Improvement Initiatives

Based on OPPAGA's field observations and review of the 1994-95 school improvement plans, stakeholder difficulty with evaluation is a widespread problem. For about half of the improvements identified in the schools visited (24 of 58), schools either did not have systematic data collection methods to evaluate their initiatives or needed further analysis to determine if preliminary results were associated with their initiatives. These schools are located in all five school districts reviewed. One school, for example, made scheduling changes to improve students' ability to learn by increasing instructional time and allowing students to concentrate on fewer subjects at one time. The school is working with a district committee to develop a method of evaluating the impact of these changes. A school in another district is implementing curriculum changes, student teaming, staff training, and other initiatives to improve overall academic performance of students. Overall, standardized test scores and performance on the Florida Writes examination at this school improved, but some teachers said standardized tests may not truly measure the impact of the improvements students are making. School staff are exploring other methods of evaluating accomplishments.

We reviewed school improvement plans of the 19 schools visited during our current review and 20 schools visited during prior reviews to determine the extent to which stakeholders are having problems with evaluation. We found that evaluation procedures included in school improvement plans of 22 schools (56%) generally lack the detail necessary to understand how schools will measure the success of their improvement initiatives. These schools are located in 9 of 15 school districts we reviewed. [5] These plans lack information about assessment measures (survey data, test scores, etc.) and evaluation processes schools will use to determine progress (5% increase in positive responses, 10% increase in math subtest, etc.). For example, one school trying to improve the learning environment by increasing school pride and unity indicated that its evaluation method will be "surveys." However, the plan does not indicate whether the school conducted previous surveys as a standard so that results can be compared to assess improvements. The plan also does not indicate who the school will survey or how it will gauge progress. Furthermore, the 1994-95 plans of three schools in one district do not describe how the schools will evaluate their school improvement initiatives as required by state law. [6]

Schools are having difficulty evaluating school improvement initiatives because school improvement plans often do not describe clearly the outcome the school is trying to achieve. Approximately two thirds (26 of 39) of the 1994-95 plans we reviewed generally contain objectives that do not describe specific improvements, the amount of improvement desired, and the status in terms of this measurement. These schools are located in 10 of the 15 school districts. Several of the objectives in the 26 plans

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[5] We reviewed a sample of plans from Alachua, Bay, Calhoun, Dade, Dixie, Hillsborough, Lake, Monroe, Orange, Palm Beach, Pinellas, St. John's, Sarasota, Volusia, and Washington school districts. Due to the small number of plans we reviewed from each district, generalizations cannot be made concerning the plans of a particular district.

[6] These schools are located in Orange County School District. Orange County School District established a process that each January schools complete a mid-year progress report indicating progress made to accomplish each annual operating objective and each activity. At the end of the school year, all schools again report on progress made in implementing their plans. These mid-year and end-of-year evaluations are reviewed by district staff. Based on their review and continual monitoring of schools, senior directors make a determination of a school's progress.

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focus on processes, such as developing career planners or providing teacher training, rather than outcomes or the specific improvement desired. To determine trends over time, we reviewed the school improvement plans of 28 of the 39 schools for 1993-94, 1994-95, and 1995-96, and found that schools continue to have difficulty describing the outcomes they are trying to achieve.

Impact of Blueprint 2000 in Other Areas

Summary Statement

> ***Blueprint 2000's most significant contribution may be that it provides schools a sense of direction and focus for school improvement initiatives and increases the involvement of parents and community members in the school improvement process. Blueprint 2000 does not appear to have reduced the time teachers spend in the classroom teaching students or affected the allocation of financial resources and school-based decision making.***

Impact on the School Improvement Process

Teachers and principals believe that Blueprint 2000 makes positive contributions by providing a framework for school improvement initiatives and increasing stakeholder involvement. Approximately one-third of teacher responses and over one-half of principal responses affirm this. Teachers and principals most often describe stakeholder involvement as very important to the school improvement planning process. Furthermore, 61% of teachers (203 of 331) and 64% of principals (126 of 196) report that under Blueprint 2000 parents and business and community members are more involved in school improvement activities than in past years. Only 8% of teachers (26 of 331) and 5% of principals (9 of 196) believe that Blueprint 2000 provides no benefits to the education system. However, nearly half of the teachers (158 of 331) and 62% (122 of 196) of principals surveyed statewide believe the improvements at their schools would occur without Blueprint 2000.

The perceptions of teachers and principals surveyed are consistent with stakeholders in the five school districts OPPAGA visited. Stakeholders generally believe Blueprint 2000 provides a mechanism for change and focus. For example, Blueprint 2000 is perceived as providing a common direction, encouraging self-examination, and providing a framework for school improvement initiatives. In addition, stakeholders believe Blueprint 2000 helps increase the involvement and awareness of community members and school staff.

Impact on Teachers

At the schools we visited, teacher involvement in school improvement activities varied by school district and school. Teachers who are not members of advisory councils generally serve on various teacher committees and work with school advisory councils in developing and implementing school improvement initiatives. On the whole, teachers did not believe that the time and effort spent on planning and implementing school improvement activities takes too much time from teaching. Information gathered during discussions with teachers seems consistent with responses of teachers surveyed statewide. For instance, of 331 teachers surveyed statewide, 244 (74%) indicated Blueprint 2000 did not take too much time away from teaching students. Teacher perceptions may be due to the fact that school improvement activities at several schools are held after school or on days that students are released early.

In considering the time and effort spent training, planning, and other school improvement activities, only 11% of teachers surveyed (38 of 331) statewide are not satisfied with their school's improvements. Furthermore, approximately 40% of teachers surveyed (134 of 331) indicate Blueprint 2000 has improved teacher satisfaction at their school. Consistent with teachers, 48% of principals surveyed (94 of 196) report that Blueprint 2000 improved teacher satisfaction.

While 66% of teachers surveyed (218 of 331) statewide believe Blueprint 2000's impact is not particularly negative, some teachers are frustrated with how much time they must devote to school improvement activities. Teacher

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frustrations often center on the school improvement process. For example, some teachers indicated too much time and paperwork is required for year-end evaluations, scheduling and attending school advisory council meetings, or making sure plans include clearly stated, measurable outcomes and related strategies. Teachers at one school stated they are taken out of class often and frequently must attend after-school meetings that focus on developing and implementing school improvement plans. At schools in two districts some teachers are angry and frustrated because tracking the implementation of their school improvement plan takes too much of their time. They believe the state is holding them accountable for implementing all the strategies in their plan. Consequently, they spend considerable time and effort documenting the number of strategies implemented rather than determining the effect of strategies, or student outcomes. For instance, these teachers spend significant effort identifying who receives training and when or counting the number of parent conferences and contacts. Some of these teachers said that while they received several sets of instructions on how to evaluate their school improvement objectives, these guidelines were unclear. For additional information on stakeholders' perceptions of Blueprint 2000, refer to Appendix A.

Impact on School Administration

Blueprint 2000 is not perceived as having a significant impact on school administration. Statewide, 70% of principals (138 of 196) and 57% of teachers (188 of 331) indicate that principals have about the same control over their schools as in the past. Teachers and principals surveyed statewide have mixed opinions on whether Blueprint 2000 enables teachers to have more influence in determining classroom instructional approaches. For example, 39% of teachers (130 of 331) think Blueprint 2000 enables them to have more impact in determining classroom instructional approaches and about half (163 of 331, 49%) believe they have about the same impact in this area. Principals are almost evenly divided on Blueprint 2000's impact on teachers' ability to determine classroom instructional approaches. At the schools OPPAGA visited, stakeholders' opinions are consistent with survey responses. For example, stakeholders generally have mixed opinions regarding Blueprint 2000's impact on resource allocation or school-based decision making.

Several factors may explain stakeholder opinions regarding Blueprint 2000's impact on school administration. First, shared decision making models and school-based management practices initiated prior to Blueprint 2000 provided some schools additional flexibility to allocate resources as needed. For example, shared decision making was in place several years prior to Blueprint 2000 in Monroe and Sarasota county school districts. Principals in these districts indicate that shared decision making provides the flexibility to direct resources identified in the school improvement plans. Second, budget shortfalls over the past few years are perceived by some to have decreased schools' flexibility. For example, one administrator said 1994-95 budget cuts of 8% (approximately $500,000) made it difficult to shift resources. And third, some school administrators indicated they always sought the input of stakeholders when making decisions even prior to Blueprint 2000.

Additional Observations on the Impact of Blueprint 2000

Summary Statement

High rates of students transferring into and out of school during the school year and other factors make it difficult for schools to evaluate the effect of initiatives on student performance. For instance, mobility rates for the 19 schools we visited ranged from 19% to 79%, and 12 schools had mobility rates of at least 25%. In addition, confusion regarding Blueprint 2000 requirements is hindering the development of long-term plans and creating unnecessary work. Although school boards and district administrators are taking steps to develop better evaluation methods, they need additional assistance to assess the impact of their school improvement initiatives and understand Blueprint 2000 requirements.

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Mobility Rates

High rates of students transferring into or out of a school during the year (defined as the school's "mobility rate") make it difficult to assess the impact of school improvement initiatives. For example, 1994-95 Department of Education data indicates mobility rates of the 19 schools we visited range from 19% at Sarasota Middle School to 79% at Grand Avenue Elementary School in Orange County. Twelve schools we visited have mobility rates of at least 25%. The 1994 data shows half of the state's elementary schools' mobility rates are at least 36%, half the middle schools' mobility rates are 31% or more, and half the high schools' mobility rates are at least 33%. Some principals expressed concern that it is unfair to judge a school's efforts based on test scores of many students who attend their school for only part of the school year. In addition, due to high mobility rates, some stakeholders are not sure which students are being tested. To address this problem, Orange County School District established a district-wide goal that 90% of 9-year-old students who attend district schools since kindergarten will read at or above grade level. The district was operationalizing this goal during our visit. Districts with schools that have high mobility rates may need to develop similar methods to evaluate the overall impact of individual school initiatives to improve student performance.

Communication Among Schools

Increased communication among schools is needed to better identify needs and evaluate the impact of school improvement initiatives. Better communication among schools is needed particularly when the intended impact of school improvement initiatives is expected to occur over the long term. For example, while some elementary and middle schools are implementing initiatives to better prepare students for entry and success in high school, communication is lacking among these schools and the high schools their students will attend. Increased communication will help these schools identify student needs and follow-up on student achievement as they progress through the school system.

Development of Long-Term School Improvement Plans

Confusion regarding Blueprint 2000 requirements is hindering the development of long-term plans and creating unnecessary work. Stakeholders we spoke to believed that state law regarding the annual approval of school improvement plans requires schools to develop entirely new plans each year. Stakeholders also indicated that because school improvement plans must be approved by July 1 of each year, schools must develop plans for the next school year before the current plan is fully implemented and evaluation information, such as test scores, is available. However, schools are not required to develop completely new plans each school year and school boards have the authority to approve long-term plans that are amended on a yearly basis. In addition, school boards may approve continuation plans until evaluation data is available.

District Leadership

Some school boards and district administrators are establishing expectations for school improvement initiatives. This leadership should help schools develop challenging goals, outcome-based school improvement objectives, and better methods of evaluating school improvement initiatives. For example, Alachua County School District requires that plan objectives reflect meaningful increases in student achievement and include data-based evaluation methods and adequate progress statements. Schools in this district will be required to use these guidelines in developing 1996-97 school improvement plans. Administrators in Monroe County School District recommended that objectives reflect major improvements in each state goal area and reflect expected student outcomes. In addition, they recommended the plan strategies reflect the steps needed to bring about the desired results and that evaluation methods specify criteria for determining success. These recommendations also direct school advisory councils, with public input, to define adequate progress for each goal area before presentation to the school board. Monroe County schools must annually complete a data collection profile that provides baseline data for comparison, as well as indicators on measures associated with Blueprint 2000 goals. Stakeholders in all five districts OPPAGA visited cited the direction and assistance received from school board members, district administrators, and principals as factors that helped their schools improve.

Conclusions

Stakeholders report they are beginning to see improvements in student performance as a result of the initiatives they are implementing. For example, 71% of teachers and 88% of principals surveyed statewide believe that student performance has improved as a result of the initiatives their schools are implementing under Blueprint 2000. Stakeholders provided information such as test scores, disciplinary actions, and survey results to document about half the improvements we reviewed. Stakeholder difficulty with evaluation of outcomes is a widespread problem, and schools need assistance in developing better methods to determine the overall impact of their initiatives. For instance, the 1994-95 school improvement plans OPPAGA reviewed from most districts are vague in their descriptions of how schools plan to evaluate the success of their improvement initiatives and do not clearly describe the outcome the school is trying to achieve.

Perhaps Blueprint 2000's most significant contribution is that it provides schools a sense of direction and focus for school improvement initiatives and increases the involvement of parents and community members in the school improvement process. Blueprint 2000 does not appear either to have reduced the time teachers spend in the classroom teaching students or affected the allocation of financial resources and school-based decision making. High rates of students transferring into and out of school during the school year and other factors make it difficult for schools to evaluate the effect of initiatives on student performance. Confusion regarding Blueprint 2000 requirements is hindering the development of long-term plans and creating unnecessary work. School boards and district administrators need additional assistance to assess the impact of their school improvement initiatives and to understand Blueprint 2000 requirements.

CHAPTER IV School Advisory Councils

School advisory councils (SACs) assist schools in preparing and evaluating school improvement plans and may assist the principal in preparing the school's annual budget. SACs also provide a link between schools and the local community. State law requires all SACs to include principals, teachers, education support employees, parents, and business and community citizens. The variety of groups specified for SAC membership helps provide an appropriately balanced and broad-based approach to school improvement. State law also requires SACs to reflect the ethnic, racial, and economic community served by the school. OPPAGA's previous review of 1993-94 SACs found that often SACs did not contain all required groups, school employees were over-represented on SACs, SACs' membership did not reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of their schools' student population, and a large number of SAC members were new each year. [7] To determine if these problems have been resolved, OPPAGA reviewed SAC membership lists provided by 65 schools in 14 school districts for 1993-94, 1994-95, and 1995-96. [8] To obtain information about SAC meetings we reviewed SAC meeting attendance records for 15 of the 65 schools.

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[7] OPPAGA Report No. 94-08, October 1994, focuses on the 1993-94 mid-year review process and was based on information obtained during site visits to 22 schools in Calhoun, Hillsborough, Palm Beach, St. Johns, and Volusia county school districts. OPPAGA Report No. 94-08 also provides additional information on SACs such as barriers that may impede the involvement of stakeholders as perceived by principals, teachers, and school advisory council members.

[8] These 65 schools include the 22 schools reviewed in OPPAGA Report 94-08 and 43 additional schools in Alachua, Bay, Dade, Dixie, Lake, Monroe, Orange, Pinellas, and Sarasota school districts. Although we visited Washington County as part of this study, because the district employs a district advisory council (DAC) it is not analyzed in this chapter of the report.

Summary Statement

SAC membership problems have not improved since 1993-94. Almost half of SACs reviewed still do not include all required stakeholder groups and school employees still dominate about two-thirds of SACs. The membership of about one-third of SACs is not reflective of the ethnic and racial diversity of their schools' student populations. Although the percentage of first-time members on SACs is stabilizing, new members represent at least 50% of 1995-96 SAC membership at one-third of the schools reviewed. The turnover of SAC members at some schools indicates that continuous, basic training for new members is needed.

Required Stakeholder Groups

School advisory councils (SACs) still do not include members representing all required stakeholder groups. As shown in Exhibit 9, 43% of the 1993-94 SACs reviewed (28 of 65) do not include all required stakeholder groups. While the percentage of SACs without all required stakeholder groups decreased to 26% in 1994-95, it increased to 42% in 1995-96.

Exhibit 9
School Advisory Councils Continue Not To Include All Required Stakeholder Groups

Year	Number of SACs That Do Not Include All Required Stakeholder Groups *(Total Reviewed: 65)*	Percent of SACs
1993-94	28	43%
1994-95	17	26%
1995-96	27	42%

Source: Compiled by the Office of Program Policy and Government Accountability based on SAC member information provided by schools.

SACs are most likely to not include business/community member representatives. For example, 25% of the 1995-96 SACs do not include business/community representatives. (See Exhibit 10.) In addition, 17% of 1995-96 SACs do not include education support employees. The 1995-96 SACs of the two vocational-technical centers reviewed do not include parent members as required by Florida law. Current law requires vocational-technical centers to include students on their SACs. Since vocational-technical centers serve primarily adult students, it may not be necessary to also require their SACS to include parent members.

Overall, OPPAGA found that the 27 schools whose 1995-96 SACs do not include all required stakeholder groups are located in 10 of 14 school districts. The 1995-96 SACs reviewed in Alachua, Calhoun, Dixie, and Hillsborough county school districts contain all required stakeholder groups.

Exhibit 10
42% of 1995-96 School Advisory Councils Reviewed Do Not Include All Required Stakeholder Groups

School District	Number of SACs Reviewed	SACs Including All Required Groups	Number of 1995-96 SACs That Do Not Include Representatives From the Following Groups:		
			Business and Community	Educational Support	Parents
Alachua	4	4			
Bay	4	0	2	2	
Calhoun	3	3			
Dade*	10	6	1	3	
Dixie	3	3			
Hillsborough	5	5			
Lake	4	2		2	
Monroe*	3	2	1	1	
Orange	4	2	1		1
Palm Beach	5	1	3	1	
Pinellas	7	5	1	1	
Sarasota	4	2	1		1
St. Johns*	4	1	3	1	
Volusia	5	2	3		
TOTAL	65	38	16	11	2

Note: All SACS included administrators. The two schools that do not have parent SAC members are vocational technical centers. These schools generally serve adult students. According to membership lists provided, one SAC in Dade County did not include a member representing teachers, but included a teacher who represented the teachers' union. * One SAC in Monroe County and St. Johns County did not have representatives for 2 groups.

Source: Compiled by the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability staff based on information provided by schools.

School Employees on SACs

SACs continue to be dominated by school employees. To maximize the broad-based approach to school improvement, ideally no stakeholder group should dominate a SAC. While Florida law specifies that SAC membership must be appropriately balanced, it is unclear how this requirement should be interpreted. OPPAGA reviewed the 1995-96 SACs of 65 schools to determine if school employees account for more than 50% of a SAC's members. As shown in Exhibit 11, we found that school employees comprise the majority of members on 68% of the 1993-94 SACs reviewed. Similarly, 63% of 1995-96 SACs reviewed are dominated by school employees.

Exhibit 11
School Advisory Councils Continue to be Dominated By School Employees

Year	Number of SACs With More Than 50% of Members Employed By The School *(Total Reviewed: 65)*	Percent of SACs
1993-94	44	68%
1994-95	39	60%
1995-96	41	63%

Source: Compiled by the Office of Program Policy and Government Accountability based on SAC member information provided by schools.

Domination of SACs by school employees is widespread. None of the SACs reviewed in Alachua, Monroe, and Sarasota county school districts are comprised primarily of school employees. However, the 41 schools whose 1995-96 SACs are comprised primarily of school employees are located in 11 of the 14 school districts reviewed. (See Exhibit 12.) The predominance of school employees on SACs may not be consistent with the Legislature's intent to ensure an appropriately balanced, broad-based approach to school improvement. Appendix B provides additional information on the composition of the 65 SACs reviewed.

Exhibit 12
63% of the 1995-96 SACs Reviewed
Are Dominated By School Employees

School District	Number of SACs Reviewed	Number of SACs With More Than 50% of Members Employed by The School
Alachua	4	0
Bay	4	2
Calhoun	3	3
Dade	10	10
Dixie	3	3
Hillsborough	5	4
Lake	4	3
Monroe	3	0
Orange	4	3
Palm Beach	5	3
Pinellas	7	2
Sarasota	4	0
St. Johns	4	4
Volusia	5	4
TOTAL	65	41

Source: Compiled by the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability based on 1995-96 SAC member information provided by schools.

Racial and Ethnic Representation of SACs

SAC membership continues not to reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of schools' student populations. Florida law requires SAC members to be representative of the ethnic, racial, and economic community served by the school. OPPAGA compared the proportion of white, African-American, and Hispanic SAC members to the student population at 65 schools for 1993-94, 1994-95, and 1995-96. We found that for each year reviewed approximately one-third of SACs have differences of 20% or more between their racial composition and their schools' student population. (See Exhibit 13.)

Exhibit 13

SAC Membership Continues Not to Reflect the Ethnic and Racial Diversity of Schools' Student Populations

Year	Number of SACs Whose Racial Composition Differs By At Least 20% When Compared to Their Schools' Student Body *(Total Reviewed: 65)*	Percent of SACs
1993-94	20	31%
1994-95	20	31%
1995-96	23	35%

Source: Compiled by the Office of Program Policy and Government Accountability based on SAC member information provided by schools.

Most districts OPPAGA reviewed are having problems with the racial and ethnic representation of SAC membership. None of the SACs reviewed in Calhoun, Dixie, Hillsborough, or Sarasota county school districts have a difference of 20% or more between the racial composition of the SACs and the schools' student population. However, the 23 schools whose 1995-96 SACs had a difference of 20% or more between their racial composition and their schools' student population are located in 10 of 14 districts. (See Exhibit 14.) For example, one school's SAC membership is 29% white, 48% African-American, and 24% Hispanic, while the school's student population is 1% white, 70% African-American, and 28% Hispanic. In one district nine of ten SACs have differences greater than 20% in at least one racial or ethnic group. Appendix C contains additional information on the ethnic and racial composition of SACs reviewed.

Exhibit 14
35% of 1995-96 SACs Reviewed Are Not Representative of Their Student Body

School District	Number of SACs Reviewed	Number of SACs Representative of Their Student Body	SACs Whose Racial Composition Differs By At Least 20% When Compared to the Schools' Student Body
Alachua	4	2	2
Bay	4	3	1
Calhoun	3	3	0
Dade	10	1	9
Dixie	3	3	0
Hillsborough	5	5	0
Lake	4	3	1
Monroe	3	1	2
Orange	4	2	2
Palm Beach	5	2	3
Pinellas	7	6	1
Sarasota	4	4	0
St. Johns	4	3	1
Volusia	5	4	1
	65	42	23

Source: Compiled by the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability based on 1995-96 SAC member and student information provided by schools.

Attendance of SAC Members

Most of the schools OPPAGA visited did not regularly maintain SAC attendance records, thus we are unable to make general conclusions regarding SAC meeting attendance. However, based on the attendance records maintained by seven schools, the overall attendance rate at 1994-95 SAC meetings ranged from 40% to 75%. (See Exhibit 15.) Attendance varied by stakeholder group and school. For example, teachers and administrators attended meetings most often. In addition, in some schools business/community members or educational support staff regularly attended (attended at least half of the meetings) while at other schools, these groups did not attend regularly.

Exhibit 15
Overall Attendance At School Advisory Council Meetings Varied By School And Stakeholder Group

School District	School Advisory Council	Attendance Rate					
		All Members	Parents**	Teachers	Business and Community	Administrators	Educational Support
Alachua	1	63%	64%	86%	52%	*	0%
	2	68%	76%	70%	38%	100%	100%
	3	67%	63%	75%	38%	88%	100%
	4	75%	76%	82%	21%	91%	9%
Monroe	5	40%	37%	46%	38%	92%	50%
Orange	6	60%	NA	56%	81%	93%	55%
Sarasota	7	72%	NA	73%	63%	82%	56%

Note: * The principal was an unofficial member of the SAC and not included in attendance records.
** The Orange and Sarasota county schools are technical centers that had no parent SAC members.

Source: Compiled by the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability based on available 1994-95 school advisory council attendance records from schools visited.

SAC Membership Changes

The percentage of new members on SACs is stabilizing. For example, OPPAGA's review of 1993-94 SAC membership lists found that 57% of SAC members were serving for the first time. (See Exhibit 16.) In comparison, we found that the percentage of new SAC members decreased to 40% in 1994-95 and 1995-96.

Exhibit 16
The Percentage Of New Members On SACs Reviewed Is Stabilizing

Year	Overall Percentage of Members Serving Their First Term on 65 SACs Reviewed
1993-94	57%
1994-95	40%
1995-96	40%

Source: Compiled by the Office of Program Policy and Government Accountability based on SAC member information provided by schools.

Based on SAC membership lists, new members represent at least 50% of 1995-96 SAC membership in 21 of 65 schools (32%). These 21 schools are located in 12 of 14 school districts reviewed. (See Exhibit 17.) None of the 1995-96 SACs in two districts reviewed, Dixie and St. Johns county school districts, have more than 50% new members. Over half of the parents (252 of 453) on 1995-96 SACs and about one-third of the teachers (152 of 444) are serving their first year. The turnover of members on some SACs indicates that basic Blueprint 2000 training is needed for new SAC members.

Exhibit 17
One-Third of 1995-96 SACs Reviewed Have More Than 50% New Members

School District	Total Number of SACs Reviewed	SACs by Percentage of New Members in 1995-96			
		75% to 100%	50% to 74%	30% to 49%	0% to 29%
Alachua	4		2	1	1
Bay	4		1	2	1
Calhoun	3		1	2	
Dade	10		3	2	5
Dixie	3				3
Hillsborough	5	1	2	2	
Lake	4	1	1		2
Monroe	3	1			2
Orange	4	1			3
Palm Beach	5		1	1	3
Pinellas	7		1	3	3
Sarasota	4		2	1	1
St. Johns	4			4	
Volusia	5	1	2		2
TOTAL	65	5	16	18	26

Source: Compiled by the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability based on information provided by schools.

Conclusions

SACs assist schools in preparing and evaluating school improvement plans and may assist their principals in preparing the annual school budget. SACs also provide a link between schools and the local community. State law requires SACs to include principals, teachers, education support employees, parents, and business and community citizens and to reflect the ethnic, racial, and economic community served by the school. SAC composition, racial and ethnic representation, and membership turnover are all factors that affect SACs' ability to carry out their role in implementing Blueprint 2000. We found that SAC membership problems have not improved since previous OPPAGA reviews. SACs still do not include all required stakeholder groups, school employees still dominate SACs, and the membership of about one-third of SACs is not reflective of the ethnic and racial diversity of their schools' student populations. Although the percentage of first-time members on SACs is stabilizing, new members represent at least 50% of 1995-96 SAC membership at one-third of the schools reviewed. The turnover of SAC members at these schools indicates that continuous basic Blueprint 2000 training is needed for new members.

CHAPTER V Conclusions and Recommendations

The Legislature created Blueprint 2000 to provide guidelines for achieving school improvement and accountability and for returning responsibility to schools, teachers, and parents. Blueprint 2000 establishes seven broad state education goals and provides a framework for school communities to develop school improvement initiatives to meet these goals. OPPAGA conducted field work as schools began implementing their third school improvement plans under Blueprint 2000. We found:

- All but one of the 39 schools we reviewed included goals to improve student performance in their 1994-95 school improvement plans. Over time, school improvement plans are becoming more focused in terms of the number of improvement initiatives that schools are implementing simultaneously. Focusing on implementing fewer initiatives at the same time enables schools to set priorities for directing limited resources, such as time and funds, to activities that will most likely help them improve;

- Stakeholders at the 19 schools we visited identified over 200 initiatives they are currently implementing to improve relative to the state's education goals. Furthermore, every school we visited is implementing initiatives to improve student performance. Overall, 44% of the initiatives stakeholders identified are designed to improve the performance of students.

- Stakeholders reported they are beginning to see improvements especially in student performance. Data such as test scores, disciplinary actions, and survey results is available to document about half the improvements we reviewed;

- Stakeholder difficulty with evaluation of outcomes is widespread. Over one-half of the school improvement plans reviewed are unclear in describing how schools will evaluate the impact of improvement initiatives. Schools need assistance to develop better methods to determine the overall impact of their initiatives;

- Blueprint 2000's most significant contribution may be that it provides schools a sense of direction and focus for school improvement initiatives and increases the involvement of parents and community members in the school improvement process. Stakeholders indicate that Blueprint 2000 does not appear to have reduced the time teachers spend in the classroom teaching students or affected the allocation of financial resources and school based decision making;

- High rates of students transferring into and out of school during the school year and other factors make it difficult for schools to evaluate the effect of initiatives on student performance;

- Increased communication among schools is needed to better identify needs and evaluate the impact of school improvement initiatives. Better communication among schools is needed particularly when the intended impact of school improvement initiatives is expected to occur over the long term;

- Confusion regarding Blueprint 2000 requirements is hindering the development of long-term plans and creating unnecessary work;

- School boards and district administrators are taking the lead in establishing expectations for school improvement initiatives. This leadership should help schools develop challenging goals, outcome based school improvement objectives, and better methods of evaluating school improvement initiatives. However, local educators need additional assistance to assess the impact of their school improvement initiatives and understand Blueprint 2000 requirements;

- School Advisory Council (SAC) membership problems have not improved since 1993-94. SACs still do not include all required stakeholder groups and school employees still dominate about two-thirds of SACs. The membership of about one-third of SACs is not reflective of the ethnic and racial diversity of their schools' student populations. Although the percentage of first-time members on SACs is stabilizing, new members represent at least 50% of 1995-96 SAC membership at one-third of the schools reviewed. The turnover of SAC members at some schools indicates that continuous basic Blueprint 2000 training is still needed for new members; and

- Current law requires vocational-technical centers to include students on their SACs. Since vocational technical centers serve primarily adult students, it may not be necessary to also require their SACs to include parent members.

Recommendations to the Legislature

School advisory councils are designed to increase the involvement of all stakeholders in the identification of school needs and initiatives to address these needs. To ensure a broad-based approach to school improvement, we recommend that the Legislature:

- Amend s. 229.58(1)(a), F.S., to require that no more than 50% of a school's SAC members be employed at that school. Limiting the school employee domination of SACs will better ensure stakeholders such as parents and business/community members have adequate opportunities for input in the school improvement process as intended by the Legislature; and

- Amend s. 229.58(1)(a), F.S., to remove the requirement that vocational-technical centers include parent members on their SACs, since vocational-technical centers serve primarily adult students.

Recommendations to the Florida Commission on Education Reform and Accountability

The Florida Commission on Education Reform and Accountability serves as an advisory body to oversee the development, establishment, implementation, and maintenance of Blueprint 2000. Blueprint 2000 requires that SACs be composed of certain stakeholders such as parents and business/community members. Because the impact of many improvement initiatives, particularly in student performance, are long-term and evaluation of the impact of these initiatives is critical to the success of Blueprint 2000, we recommend that the Commission:

- Work with school boards, the School Board Association, and the Department of Education staff to ensure the development of guidelines, methods and monitoring strategies so that district school boards follow requirements regarding SAC composition. These methods could include incentives such as school board certification that SACs meet statutory requirements as a condition of receiving special state awards or consideration for recognition programs such as Blue Ribbon Schools, Principal of the Year, Teacher of the Year, or Five Star Schools. These incentives may better ensure that school boards establish SACs that include all stakeholder groups as required by law; and

- Work with the Department of Education to ensure that local educators receive needed information concerning the development of long-term plans and assistance in evaluating the impact of their initiatives and the effect of factors such as student mobility on school efforts to improve. As part of the feedback report required by law, report on the effectiveness of these efforts.

Recommendations to the Florida Department of Education

Several factors affect the ability of schools to improve. These factors include the ability of stakeholders to determine the impact of their school improvement initiatives, the input of all stakeholder groups in identifying needs and developing improvement initiatives, and stakeholder understanding of Blueprint 2000 requirements. We recommend that the Department of Education:

- Develop training modules and provide training to school districts and schools regarding methods to enable stakeholders to evaluate the impact of school improvement initiatives based on desired outcomes. This training should assist stakeholders in collecting data to determine the overall impact of the initiatives to improve relative to the state's seven education goals;

- Identify strategies to assist school districts and schools to develop evaluation methods that consider factors such as high mobility rates. For example, the Department could share best practices districts or schools are currently using to assess the impact of their school improvement initiatives. This information will help districts and schools with high mobility rates determine the impact of their efforts to improve student performance;

- Provide information to all school boards about the flexibility they currently have to approve long-term or continuation school improvement plans. This information will clarify the misunderstanding some stakeholders have regarding Blueprint 2000 requirements regarding school improvement plans. Clarifying these requirements will eliminate unnecessary work such as developing entirely new plans each year or developing school improvement plans for the next year before data is available to evaluate the impact of current school improvement plans;

- Continue to make training modules available to districts and schools that can be used to provide needed training to new SAC members. This training will help ensure that new SAC members understand their role and responsibilities and can fully participate in the school improvement process; and

- Provide information to school board members regarding statutory requirements of SAC membership. School board members need to understand their responsibilities regarding the establishment of SACs to better ensure that SACs include all required stakeholders and reflect the ethnic and racial community served by the school.

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Appendix A
Stakeholders' Perceptions of Blueprint 2000

Appendix A provides information on the perceptions of teachers and principals regarding Blueprint 2000. Information in this appendix is based on our surveys of teachers and of principals. We surveyed 331 teachers and 196 principals statewide regarding their perceptions on Blueprint 2000 and compared their responses to our 1993 survey of teachers. We asked teachers and principals their level of support for Blueprint 2000; the support of other stakeholders such as school advisory council members and school board members; and their opinions on the long-term impact of Blueprint 2000. Teachers and principals are generally supportive of Blueprint 2000 in concept; the largest portion of teachers (48%) said their level of support for Blueprint 2000 is "moderate" and the majority of principals (53%) describe their support for Blueprint 2000 as "strong." Teachers and principals generally believe that the support of teachers at their school was moderate and usually characterize SAC, superintendent, school board support for Blueprint 2000 as "strong." Both teachers and principals are divided in their opinions regarding whether Blueprint 2000 will have a long-term impact or is just a passing fad.

Teacher survey responses in 1995 regarding their level of support for Blueprint 2000 are similar to 1993 survey responses. However, a comparison of the two surveys indicates that teacher support for Blueprint 2000 may be moderating over time. Fewer teachers describe their support as "strong" compared to responses in the previous study. In contrast, 88% of teachers and 88% of principals in the 1995 survey indicate their level of support for Blueprint 2000 has either increased or remained the same over time. Table A-1 provides teachers' perceptions on the level of support for Blueprint 2000 from both statewide surveys, and Table A-2 provides principals' perceptions on the level of support for Blueprint 2000. Table A-3 provides information on teachers' and principals' perceptions on the long-term impact of Blueprint 2000.

Table A-1
Level of Support for Blueprint 2000
As Perceived Teachers Surveyed

Level of Support Based on Teachers Surveyed In the Summer of 1995 (n= 331)	Strong Support	Moderate Support	Weak Support	Do Not Know
Teacher's (Own)	34%	48%	15%	2%
Other Teachers	19%	58%	16%	7%
Principals	76%	12%	4%	7%
SAC Members	57%	28%	5%	9%
Superintendent	71%	8%	3%	18%
School Boards	65%	14%	3%	18%

Level of Support Based on Teachers Surveyed In the Fall of 1993 (n= 375)	Strong Support	Moderate Support	Weak Support	Do Not Know
Teacher's (Own)	41%	39%	13%	7%
Other Teachers	26%	45%	16%	13%
Principals	76%	10%	2%	12%
SAC Members	60%	18%	3%	19%
Superintendent and Other District Administrators	65%	5%	2%	28%
School Boards	62%	7%	4%	27%

Source: Compiled by the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability.

Table A-2
Level of Support for Blueprint 2000
As Perceived by Principals Surveyed

Level of Support Based on Principals Surveyed In the Summer of 1995 (n= 196)	Strong Support	Moderate Support	Weak Support	Do Not Know
Principal's (Own)	53%	38%	8%	1%
Teachers at Their School	26%	60%	13%	1%
SAC Members	58%	34%	7%	1%
Superintendent	87%	9%	< 1%	4%
School Boards	81%	12%	3%	4%

Source: Compiled by the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability.

Table A-3
Blueprint 2000: Long-Term Impact or Passing Fad?
As Perceived by Principals and Teachers Surveyed

	Principals Surveyed In 1995 (n=196)	Teachers Surveyed In 1995 (n=331)	*Teachers Surveyed In 1993 (n=375)*
Long-Term Impact	51%	44%	*40%*
Passing Fad	40%	43%	*41%*
Not Sure	9%	13%	*19%*

Source: Compiled by the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability.

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Appendix B
Groups Represented on School Advisory Councils

Appendix B provides information on the school advisory councils of 65 schools in 14 school districts. The information is based on membership lists provided by schools and school district administrators. [9] Each table provides specific information on the number of administrators, teachers, support staff, parents, business community members and members employed by the school or school district. Table B-1 contains information on 1995-96 school advisory councils, Table B-2 contains information on 1994-95 school advisory councils, and Table B-3 contains information on 1993-94 school advisory councils.

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[9] These 14 school districts are Alachua, Bay, Calhoun, Dade, Dixie, Hillsborough, Lake, Monroe, Orange, Palm Beach, Pinellas, St. Johns, Sarasota, and Volusia.

Table B-1
Groups Represented on SACs According to SAC Membership Lists for 1995-96

	School	Number of Non-Student SAC Members	Administrators	Teachers	Support Staff	Parents	Business Community	Teacher Union Steward	Other	Number of SAC Members	
										Employed by School	Not Employed by School
ALACHUA	1	15	1	5	1	5	3	0	0	7	8
	2	17	1	5	1	5	5	0	0	7	10
	3	19	2	5	1	5	6	0	0	8	11
	4	14	1	4	1	4	4	0	0	6	8
BAY	5	23	2	5	0	13	3	0	0	9	14
	6	12	2	1	5	4	0	0	0	9	3
	7	12	2	6	1	3	0	0	0	9	3
	8	34	3	6	0	24	1	0	0	9	25
CALHOUN	9	13	1	6	1	3	2	0	0	8	5
	10	21	3	9	1	7	1	0	0	13	8
	11	25	2	12	2	6	3	0	0	16	9
DADE	12	15	1	8	1	2	2	1	0	13	2
	13	13	1	6	2	3	0	1	0	11	2
	14	12	1	4	1	4	1	1	0	8	4
	15	25	4	9	3	4	4	1	0	18	7
	16	4	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	3	1
	17	13	1	5	2	3	1	1	0	9	4
	18	17	2	9	0	4	1	1	0	12	5
	19	16	2	7	2	2	2	1	0	13	3
	20	15	2	7	0	4	1	1	0	10	5
	21	18	2	8	2	5	1	0	0	12	6
DIXIE	22	23	2	13	2	3	3	0	0	17	6
	23	13	1	3	1	6	2	0	0	7	6
	24	13	1	5	2	4	1	0	0	7	6
HILLSBOROUGH	25	25	2	8	2	9	4	0	0	13	12
	26	19	2	9	3	2	1	2	0	16	3
	27	32	2	12	4	12	1	1	0	19	13
	28	23	2	4	3	9	4	1	0	10	13
	29	31	2	16	2	6	4	1	0	22	9
LAKE	30	23	1	6	3	11	2	0	0	11	12
	31	16	1	8	0	5	2	0	0	9	7
	32	24	1	11	2	8	2	0	0	14	10
	33	22	2	10	0	8	2	0	0	12	10
MONROE	34	17	2	1	1	12	1	0	0	4	13
	35	17	1	1	0	15	0	0	0	2	15
	36	29	3	3	2	19	2	0	0	9	20
ORANGE	37	26	1	8	4	5	8	0	0	13	13
	38	20	1	8	2	9	0	0	0	11	9
	39	19	3	6	1	8	1	0	0	10	9
	40	27	4	11	6	0	6	0	0	20	7

	School	Number of Non-Student SAC Members	Administrators	Teachers	Support Staff	Parents	Business Community	Teacher Union Steward	Other	Number of SAC Members	
										Employed by School	Not Employed by School
PALM BEACH	41	21	1	5	5	7	3	0	0	12	9
	42	10	1	4	2	3	0	0	0	7	3
	43	29	1	14	1	13	0	0	0	17	12
	44	22	2	5	0	13	2	0	0	7	15
	45	36	3	6	2	23	0	0	2	13	23
PINELLAS	46	22	5	7	1	9	0	0	0	11	11
	47	21	2	9	0	6	4	0	0	11	10
	48	19	1	7	1	8	1	0	1	11	8
	49	21	2	8	2	7	2	0	0	10	11
	50	27	5	6	1	7	8	0	0	10	17
	51	19	2	5	1	6	5	0	0	7	12
	52	16	2	5	1	5	2	0	1	8	8
SARASOTA	53	10	1	3	1	4	1	0	0	5	5
	54	14	1	4	3	6	0	0	0	7	7
	55	13	2	3	1	5	2	0	0	6	7
	56	10	3	2	1	0	4	0	0	5	5
ST. JOHNS	57	20	2	6	4	5	3	0	0	11	9
	58	18	2	8	1	7	0	0	0	11	7
	59	17	1	10	0	6	0	0	0	11	6
	60	21	2	14	2	3	0	0	0	17	4
VOLUSIA	61	20	3	6	2	8	1	0	0	11	9
	62	20	2	8	1	9	0	0	0	11	9
	63	24	1	8	3	12	0	0	0	12	12
	64	18	1	8	2	7	0	0	0	11	7
	65	34	4	13	2	12	3	0	0	18	16

Source: Based on data provided by schools and the Department of Education.

Table B-2
Groups Represented on SACs According to SAC Membership Lists for 1994-95

	School	Number of Non-Student SAC Members	Administrators	Teachers	Support Staff	Parents	Business Community	Teacher Union Steward	Other	Number of SAC Members: Employed by School	Number of SAC Members: Not Employed by School
ALACHUA	1	13	1	4	1	4	3	0	0	7	6
	2	16	1	5	1	5	4	0	0	7	9
	3	17	2	5	2	4	4	0	0	8	9
	4	11	1	3	1	3	3	0	0	5	6
BAY	5	22	4	2	0	14	1	0	1	7	15
	6	13	1	2	3	6	1	0	0	9	4
	7	13	2	6	2	3	0	0	0	10	3
	8	58	2	5	0	50	1	0	0	7	51
CALHOUN	9	13	1	4	2	3	3	0	0	7	6
	10	21	2	9	2	7	1	0	0	13	8
	11	6	2	4	0	0	0	0	0	6	0
DADE	12	18	2	6	3	5	1	1	0	16	2
	13	16	1	6	2	5	1	1	0	12	4
	14	13	1	4	2	4	1	1	0	8	5
	15	22	1	8	4	7	2	0	0	14	8
	16	4	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	3	1
	17	16	1	6	2	5	1	1	0	11	5
	18	17	1	7	2	5	1	1	0	11	6
	19	12	1	6	1	2	1	1	0	10	2
	20	15	2	7	0	4	1	1	0	10	5
	21	18	2	7	2	5	1	1	0	12	6
DIXIE	22	6	1	1	1	1	2	0	0	3	3
	23	13	1	2	1	7	2	0	0	7	6
	24	10	4	2	1	1	2	0	0	6	4
HILLSBOROUGH	25	14	2	4	1	5	2	0	0	7	7
	26	23	2	9	2	6	2	2	0	15	8
	27	28	2	11	5	6	3	1	0	20	8
	28	20	2	4	4	7	3	0	0	10	10
	29	31	2	12	5	4	7	1	0	20	11
LAKE	30	16	1	6	1	6	2	0	0	11	5
	31	16	1	7	1	5	2	0	0	9	7
	32	24	1	10	2	9	2	0	0	13	11
	33	26	3	11	1	5	6	0	0	15	11
MONROE	34	19	2	2	2	11	2	0	0	6	13
	35	28	2	6	1	16	3	0	0	9	19
	36	38	3	3	1	28	3	0	0	7	31
ORANGE	37	27	1	9	4	6	7	0	0	14	13
	38	19	1	9	1	8	0	0	0	12	7
	39	22	1	11	1	8	1	0	0	13	9
	40	17	4	5	7	0	1	0	0	15	2

	School	Number of Non-Student SAC Members	Administrators	Teachers	Support Staff	Parents	Business Community	Teacher Union Steward	Other	Number of SAC Members	
										Employed by School	Not Employed by School
PALM BEACH	41	17	1	6	2	5	3	0	0	9	8
	42	11	1	4	0	6	0	0	0	5	6
	43	21	1	8	1	10	1	0	0	10	11
	44	15	2	3	2	8	0	0	0	6	9
	45	6	1	2	0	2	1	0	0	2	4
PINELLAS	46	21	5	6	1	6	3	0	0	10	11
	47	24	3	12	0	5	4	0	0	15	9
	48	17	1	7	2	6	1	0	0	9	8
	49	22	2	7	3	8	2	0	0	10	12
	50	23	3	6	2	6	6	0	0	10	13
	51	19	2	5	1	6	5	0	0	7	12
	52	16	2	5	1	5	3	0	0	8	8
SARASOTA	53	10	1	3	1	4	1	0	0	5	5
	54	13	2	4	1	4	2	0	0	7	6
	55	10	2	1	1	3	3	0	0	4	6
	56	9	3	2	1	0	3	0	0	6	3
ST. JOHNS	57	20	1	7	4	5	3	0	0	11	9
	58	34	2	14	2	13	1	2	0	18	16
	59	17	1	12	1	2	1	0	0	13	4
	60	13	1	4	5	3	0	0	0	9	4
VOLUSIA	61	20	3	6	2	8	1	0	0	10	10
	62	20	2	8	1	9	0	0	0	12	8
	63	26	1	8	2	15	0	0	0	12	14
	64	17	1	1	2	13	0	0	0	4	13
	65	25	2	10	2	7	4	0	0	12	13

Source: Based on data provided by schools and the Department of Education.

Table B-3
Groups Represented on SACs According to SAC Membership Lists for 1993-94

	School	Number of Non-Student SAC Members	Administrators	Teachers	Support Staff	Parents	Business Community	Teacher Union Steward	Other	Number of SAC Members	
										Employed by School	Not Employed by School
ALACHUA	1	16	1	5	0	5	5	0	0	7	9
	2	15	1	5	1	5	3	0	0	7	8
	3	17	2	4	1	6	4	0	0	7	10
	4	12	2	3	1	3	3	0	0	6	6
BAY	5	37	4	9	0	19	4	0	1	13	24
	6	13	1	4	0	8	0	0	0	7	6
	7	13	3	3	1	3	3	0	0	7	6
	8	61	3	10	0	48	0	0	0	13	48
CALHOUN	9	12	1	6	1	2	2	0	0	8	4
	10	11	1	4	2	3	1	0	0	7	4
	11	13	1	5	2	4	1	0	0	8	5
DADE	12	18	2	6	3	5	1	1	0	17	1
	13	16	1	6	2	5	1	1	0	12	4
	14	11	1	3	1	3	2	1	0	6	5
	15	16	1	5	3	5	1	1	0	11	5
	16	4	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	3
	17	16	1	6	2	5	1	1	0	11	5
	18	18	2	9	0	5	1	1	0	12	6
	19	13	1	6	0	4	1	1	0	9	4
	20	15	2	6	1	4	1	1	0	9	6
	21	18	2	7	2	5	1	1	0	12	6
DIXIE	22	6	1	4	0	0	1	0	0	5	1
	23	13	1	2	1	8	1	0	0	6	7
	24	6	0	3	0	1	2	0	0	3	3
HILLSBOROUGH	25	20	2	8	4	4	1	1	0	15	5
	26	21	2	9	5	2	1	2	0	18	3
	27	17	2	7	5	1	1	1	0	15	2
	28	18	2	6	2	6	1	1	0	11	7
	29	42	3	32	3	2	0	2	0	40	2
LAKE	30	18	1	7	1	7	2	0	0	12	6
	31	16	1	7	1	5	2	0	0	9	7
	32	25	1	11	2	9	2	0	0	15	10
	33	25	3	10	1	6	5	0	0	15	10
MONROE	34	18	2	8	0	7	1	0	0	10	8
	35	23	2	1	0	19	1	0	0	4	19
	36	39	2	3	0	33	1	0	0	5	34
ORANGE	37	13	1	6	1	5	0	0	0	8	5
	38	19	2	6	4	7	0	0	0	13	6
	39	40	2	10	0	27	1	0	0	11	29
	40	25	5	8	6	0	6	0	0	19	6

	School	Number of Non-Student SAC Members	Administrators	Teachers	Support Staff	Parents	Business Community	Teacher Union Steward	Other	Number of SAC Members: Employed by School	Number of SAC Members: Not Employed by School
PALM BEACH	41	20	1	7	1	6	5	0	0	9	11
	42	19	1	6	3	9	0	0	0	10	9
	43	25	1	6	1	16	1	0	0	8	17
	44	30	2	11	2	15	0	0	0	15	15
	45	28	4	13	0	9	2	0	0	17	11
PINELLAS	46	22	3	5	1	8	5	0	0	9	13
	47	21	2	10	0	7	2	0	0	12	9
	48	7	1	0	1	4	0	0	1	2	5
	49	20	2	7	2	8	1	0	0	10	10
	50	26	3	6	2	8	7	0	0	10	16
	51	19	3	5	1	7	3	0	0	8	11
	52	19	2	5	0	8	3	0	1	10	9
SARASOTA	53	11	1	3	2	5	0	0	0	6	5
	54	13	1	5	2	2	3	0	0	8	5
	55	10	1	3	1	3	2	0	0	5	5
	56	10	2	3	1	0	4	0	0	6	4
ST. JOHNS	57	21	1	8	2	7	3	0	0	11	10
	58	22	2	10	1	7	1	0	1	13	8
	59	17	1	10	2	3	1	0	0	13	4
	60	15	1	8	1	2	3	0	0	10	5
VOLUSIA	61	24	3	11	2	6	1	0	1	16	7
	62	16	2	6	1	7	0	0	0	9	7
	63	22	2	6	4	9	1	0	0	12	10
	64	17	1	8	1	7	0	0	0	10	7
	65	26	2	11	1	10	0	0	2	14	10

Source: Based on data provided by schools and the Department of Education.

Appendix C
Racial and Ethnic Composition of School Advisory Councils

Appendix C provides racial and ethnic information on school advisory council members and students of 65 schools in 14 school districts.[10] The information is based on membership lists provided by schools and school district administrators. Table C-1 contains information on 1995-96 school advisory councils, Table C-2 contains information on 1994-95 school advisory councils, and Table C-3 contains information on 1993-94 school advisory councils.

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[10] These 14 school districts are Alachua, Bay, Calhoun, Dade, Dixie, Hillsborough, Lake, Monroe, Orange, Palm Beach, Pinellas, St. Johns, Sarasota, and Volusia.

Table C-1
Racial and Ethnic Representation 1995-1996

	School Number	Total Number of Non-Student SAC Members	Total Number of Students	WHITE		BLACK		OTHER		HISPANIC	
				SAC	Student Population	SAC	Student Population	SAC	Student Population	SAC	Student Population
ALACHUA	1	15	413	53%	62%	47%	37%	0%	1%	0%	1%
	2	17	934	88%	66%	12%	28%	0%	2%	0%	3%
	3	19	1,135	68%	44%	32%	52%	0%	2%	0%	3%
	4	14	1,471	57%	48%	43%	46%	0%	5%	0%	1%
BAY	5	23	850	96%	88%	0%	10%	0%	2%	4%	1%
	6	12	583	42%	84%	50%	14%	8%	0%	0%	2%
	7	12	981	92%	87%	8%	11%	0%	2%	0%	1%
	8	34	2,038	71%	68%	24%	23%	3%	7%	3%	2%
CALHOUN	9	13	629	100%	98%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%
	10	21	663	81%	71%	19%	27%	0%	1%	0%	1%
	11	25	406	92%	75%	8%	24%	0%	0%	0%	0%
DADE	12	15	1,825	27%	3%	20%	2%	0%	0%	53%	95%
	13	13	1,138	38%	30%	31%	18%	0%	4%	31%	48%
	14	12	1,214	50%	31%	33%	26%	0%	1%	17%	42%
	15	25	1,546	40%	5%	7%	2%	0%	1%	52%	92%
	16	4	800	75%	40%	0%	8%	0%	4%	25%	48%
	17	13	620	15%	0%	77%	97%	0%	0%	8%	3%
	18	17	1,616	76%	48%	18%	24%	0%	2%	6%	26%
	19	16	1,305	50%	17%	25%	23%	6%	1%	19%	59%
	20	15	2,275	20%	2%	67%	89%	0%	1%	13%	8%
	21	18	3,860	50%	26%	17%	7%	0%	3%	33%	64%
DIXIE	22	23	502	100%	99%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%
	23	13	679	92%	79%	8%	21%	0%	0%	0%	0%
	24	13	546	92%	90%	8%	10%	0%	0%	0%	0%
HILLSBOROUGH	25	25	520	68%	52%	20%	23%	0%	8%	12%	18%
	26	19	814	89%	84%	5%	9%	0%	0%	5%	7%
	27	32	934	44%	34%	44%	48%	0%	2%	13%	16%
	28	23	618	48%	63%	26%	21%	0%	2%	26%	14%
	29	31	2,014	71%	67%	19%	16%	0%	3%	10%	14%
LAKE	30	23	349	39%	36%	57%	63%	0%	0%	4%	1%
	31	16	576	88%	85%	6%	13%	0%	0%	6%	2%
	32	24	486	63%	63%	25%	11%	8%	0%	4%	26%
	33	22	1,528	77%	72%	23%	25%	0%	1%	0%	1%
MONROE	34	17	627	88%	81%	0%	5%	0%	1%	12%	12%
	35	17	903	41%	61%	35%	16%	12%	1%	12%	22%
	36	29	640	93%	70%	3%	8%	0%	1%	3%	21%
ORANGE	37	26	538	50%	11%	50%	86%	0%	0%	0%	3%
	38	20	1,183	65%	70%	10%	15%	5%	3%	20%	13%
	39	19	3,108	68%	66%	11%	5%	0%	5%	21%	24%
	40	27	29,997	85%	55%	15%	24%	0%	4%	0%	17%

	School Number	Total Number of Non-Student SAC Members	Total Number of Students	WHITE		BLACK		OTHER		HISPANIC	
				SAC	Student Population	SAC	Student Population	SAC	Student Population	SAC	Student Population
PALM BEACH	41	21	792	29%	1%	48%	70%	0%	0%	24%	28%
	42	10	930	70%	42%	10%	47%	10%	3%	10%	8%
	43	29	1,550	86%	38%	7%	31%	0%	2%	7%	30%
	44	22	1,356	86%	85%	5%	10%	0%	2%	9%	4%
	45	36	2,520	89%	74%	11%	13%	0%	3%	0%	10%
PINELLAS	46	22	861	91%	92%	9%	6%	0%	1%	0%	1%
	47	21	780	90%	65%	10%	31%	0%	2%	0%	1%
	48	19	1,047	84%	66%	11%	21%	5%	9%	0%	5%
	49	21	1,228	95%	91%	5%	7%	0%	1%	0%	1%
	50	27	1,833	81%	67%	19%	27%	0%	3%	0%	3%
	51	19	1,836	95%	93%	0%	5%	5%	1%	0%	2%
	52	16	908	88%	88%	6%	9%	0%	1%	8%	2%
SARASOTA	53	10	708	100%	85%	0%	11%	0%	0%	0%	3%
	54	14	1,383	100%	97%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%
	55	13	2,150	92%	89%	8%	8%	0%	1%	0%	2%
	56	10	10,819	90%	92%	0%	5%	0%	1%	10%	2%
ST. JOHNS	57	20	698	55%	95%	45%	1%	0%	1%	0%	2%
	58	18	522	94%	84%	6%	14%	0%	1%	0%	1%
	59	17	698	100%	95%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	2%
	60	21	1,981	81%	78%	10%	21%	0%	1%	10%	2%
VOLUSIA	61	20	687	35%	36%	65%	61%	0%	1%	0%	2%
	62	20	484	65%	44%	10%	6%	0%	0%	25%	49%
	63	24	1,875	75%	77%	17%	8%	0%	1%	8%	14%
	64	18	967	83%	65%	17%	32%	0%	1%	0%	3%
	65	34	1,668	91%	91%	9%	7%	0%	1%	0%	1%

NOTE: Data for schools 40 and 56 reflect cumulative, unduplicated student counts as of March 1996.

Source: Based on data provided by schools and the Department of Education.

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Table C-2
Racial and Ethnic Representation 1994-1995

	School Number	Total Number of Non-Student SAC Members	Total Number of Students	WHITE		BLACK		OTHER		HISPANIC	
				SAC	Student Population	SAC	Student Population	SAC	Student Population	SAC	Student Population
ALACHUA	1	13	418	54%	59%	46%	40%	0%	0%	0%	1%
	2	16	922	75%	69%	25%	27%	0%	2%	0%	2%
	3	17	1,124	59%	46%	41%	50%	0%	1%	0%	3%
	4	11	1,470	55%	47%	45%	47%	0%	4%	0%	1%
BAY	5	22	881	91%	85%	5%	11%	0%	2%	5%	1%
	6	13	435	54%	69%	46%	28%	0%	2%	0%	2%
	7	13	971	92%	86%	8%	11%	0%	2%	0%	2%
	8	58	1,994	81%	68%	17%	23%	0%	7%	2%	2%
CALHOUN	9	13	586	92%	97%	0%	0%	0%	1%	8%	2%
	10	21	713	76%	69%	0%	30%	24%	1%	0%	1%
	11	6	403	83%	77%	17%	22%	0%	1%	0%	0%
DADE	12	18	1,977	22%	3%	11%	1%	0%	0%	67%	96%
	13	16	932	38%	20%	25%	21%	0%	0%	38%	58%
	14	13	1,142	46%	37%	46%	24%	0%	2%	8%	37%
	15	22	1,538	23%	6%	5%	2%	0%	0%	73%	92%
	16	4	812	75%	43%	0%	8%	0%	4%	25%	44%
	17	16	574	19%	1%	75%	96%	0%	0%	6%	3%
	18	17	1,632	76%	48%	18%	26%	0%	2%	6%	24%
	19	12	1,241	42%	19%	25%	24%	0%	1%	33%	56%
	20	15	2,201	20%	2%	73%	91%	0%	0%	7%	7%
	21	18	3,622	61%	27%	17%	8%	0%	3%	22%	61%
DIXIE	22	6	448	100%	98%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%
	23	13	719	92%	80%	8%	20%	0%	0%	0%	0%
	24	10	524	90%	90%	10%	9%	0%	0%	0%	0%
HILLSBOROUGH	25	14	515	64%	54%	14%	21%	0%	6%	21%	19%
	26	23	877	87%	81%	9%	9%	0%	0%	4%	9%
	27	28	948	68%	37%	25%	47%	0%	2%	7%	14%
	28	20	609	55%	63%	30%	22%	0%	1%	15%	14%
	29	31	2,038	77%	70%	13%	13%	3%	4%	6%	13%
LAKE	30	16	352	50%	32%	44%	66%	0%	0%	6%	1%
	31	16	573	81%	93%	13%	5%	0%	0%	6%	2%
	32	24	439	83%	64%	13%	15%	0%	0%	4%	20%
	33	26	1,544	77%	74%	23%	24%	0%	1%	0%	1%
MONROE	34	19	604	84%	82%	0%	5%	0%	1%	16%	11%
	35	28	887	89%	65%	0%	18%	0%	1%	11%	16%
	36	38	595	84%	69%	3%	10%	5%	1%	8%	20%
ORANGE	37	27	528	44%	11%	56%	88%	0%	0%	0%	2%
	38	19	1,130	74%	72%	21%	14%	0%	1%	5%	12%
	39	22	2,843	64%	67%	9%	4%	0%	6%	27%	23%
	40	17	55,828	85%	58%	24%	25%	0%	3%	12%	13%

	School Number	Total Number of Non-Student SAC Members	Total Number of Students	WHITE		BLACK		OTHER		HISPANIC	
				SAC	Student Population	SAC	Student Population	SAC	Student Population	SAC	Student Population
PALM BEACH	41	17	721	41%	2%	35%	74%	0%	0%	24%	24%
	42	11	1,026	73%	43%	18%	48%	0%	3%	9%	8%
	43	21	1,547	86%	45%	5%	27%	0%	1%	10%	27%
	44	15	1,312	80%	87%	7%	8%	0%	2%	13%	3%
	45	8	2,533	100%	76%	0%	12%	0%	3%	0%	9%
PINELLAS	46	21	956	76%	93%	24%	5%	0%	1%	0%	1%
	47	24	748	96%	66%	4%	31%	0%	2%	0%	1%
	48	17	1,007	82%	65%	12%	23%	0%	9%	6%	3%
	49	22	1,262	86%	91%	14%	7%	0%	1%	0%	1%
	50	23	1,679	78%	70%	22%	25%	0%	3%	0%	3%
	51	18	1,858	89%	93%	5%	4%	5%	1%	0%	1%
	52	18	920	88%	89%	6%	8%	0%	2%	6%	1%
SARASOTA	53	10	702	90%	84%	10%	13%	0%	0%	0%	2%
	54	13	1,401	100%	98%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%
	55	10	1,990	90%	89%	10%	7%	0%	1%	0%	2%
	56	9	15,095	100%	91%	0%	5%	0%	1%	0%	2%
ST. JOHNS	57	20	274	55%	32%	45%	67%	0%	0%	0%	0%
	58	34	516	97%	82%	3%	16%	0%	0%	0%	2%
	59	17	649	100%	97%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%
	60	13	2,013	74%	76%	21%	22%	0%	1%	5%	2%
VOLUSIA	61	20	681	40%	38%	55%	59%	5%	1%	0%	2%
	62	20	496	80%	40%	5%	5%	0%	0%	15%	54%
	63	28	1,733	85%	80%	8%	7%	0%	1%	8%	12%
	64	17	917	82%	66%	18%	32%	0%	0%	0%	2%
	65	25	1,648	84%	91%	16%	7%	0%	1%	0%	1%

NOTE: Data for schools 40 and 56 reflect cumulative, unduplicated student counts.

Source: Based on data provided by schools and the Department of Education.

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Table C-3
Racial and Ethnic Representation 1993-1994

	School Number	Total Number of Non-Student SAC Members	Total Number of Students	WHITE		BLACK		OTHER		HISPANIC	
				SAC	Student Population	SAC	Student Population	SAC	Student Population	SAC	Student Population
ALACHUA	1	16	428	63%	62%	31%	38%	0%	0%	6%	1%
	2	15	917	87%	72%	13%	25%	0%	2%	0%	1%
	3	17	1,137	71%	48%	29%	49%	0%	1%	0%	2%
	4	12	1,403	67%	48%	33%	46%	0%	4%	0%	1%
BAY	5	37	835	84%	85%	14%	11%	0%	3%	3%	1%
	6	13	420	69%	72%	31%	27%	0%	0%	0%	1%
	7	13	843	92%	86%	8%	12%	0%	2%	0%	1%
	8	61	1,941	74%	69%	13%	23%	0%	6%	13%	2%
CALHOUN	9	12	499	92%	98%	0%	0%	0%	0%	8%	2%
	10	11	751	73%	71%	27%	28%	0%	1%	0%	1%
	11	13	402	85%	77%	15%	21%	0%	1%	0%	0%
DADE	12	18	2,131	17%	3%	11%	1%	0%	1%	72%	95%
	13	16	905	38%	22%	25%	24%	0%	1%	38%	53%
	14	11	1,031	64%	46%	18%	21%	9%	2%	9%	32%
	15	16	1,533	19%	5%	6%	2%	0%	0%	75%	92%
	16	4	740	100%	47%	0%	8%	0%	4%	0%	41%
	17	16	552	19%	1%	75%	95%	0%	0%	6%	3%
	18	18	1,632	72%	51%	22%	26%	0%	2%	6%	21%
	19	13	1,230	46%	19%	23%	24%	0%	1%	31%	56%
	20	15	2,164	20%	2%	73%	92%	0%	0%	7%	5%
	21	18	3,576	61%	29%	17%	8%	0%	3%	22%	60%
DIXIE	22	6	518	100%	99%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%
	23	13	773	92%	80%	8%	20%	0%	0%	0%	0%
	24	6	872	83%	91%	17%	9%	0%	0%	0%	0%
HILLSBOROUGH	25	20	497	75%	61%	15%	23%	0%	6%	10%	10%
	26	21	810	90%	84%	5%	8%	0%	0%	5%	8%
	27	17	1,031	53%	40%	24%	46%	0%	1%	24%	13%
	28	18	601	56%	63%	33%	24%	0%	1%	11%	12%
	29	42	2,142	69%	72%	21%	13%	2%	3%	7%	13%
LAKE	30	18	369	56%	40%	39%	59%	0%	0%	6%	1%
	31	16	561	81%	93%	13%	5%	0%	0%	6%	2%
	32	25	407	80%	65%	16%	15%	0%	1%	4%	19%
	33	25	1,559	80%	74%	20%	24%	0%	1%	0%	2%
MONROE	34	18	563	78%	78%	6%	6%	0%	1%	17%	14%
	35	23	898	91%	66%	9%	18%	0%	2%	0%	14%
	36	39	519	92%	69%	0%	11%	0%	1%	8%	19%
ORANGE	37	13	525	46%	12%	54%	87%	0%	0%	0%	1%
	38	19	1,208	89%	74%	5%	14%	0%	1%	5%	10%
	39	40	2,572	95%	89%	0%	4%	0%	6%	5%	22%
	40	25	62,901	76%	62%	20%	22%	0%	3%	4%	13%

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	School Number	Total Number of Non-Student SAC Members	Total Number of Students	WHITE		BLACKS		OTHER		HISPANIC	
				SAC	Student Population	SAC	Student Population	SAC	Student Population	SAC	Student Population
PALM BEACH	41	20	708	45%	1%	30%	72%	0%	0%	25%	27%
	42	19	1,475	74%	47%	11%	40%	5%	3%	11%	9%
	43	25	1,483	92%	48%	8%	27%	0%	1%	0%	24%
	44	30	1,196	87%	85%	7%	9%	0%	2%	7%	3%
	45	28	2,404	89%	79%	7%	10%	0%	3%	4%	8%
PINELLAS	46	22	948	91%	93%	9%	5%	0%	1%	0%	1%
	47	21	693	86%	67%	14%	32%	0%	1%	0%	1%
	48	7	1,004	86%	66%	0%	24%	0%	8%	14%	3%
	49	20	1,200	90%	93%	10%	6%	0%	1%	0%	1%
	50	26	1,734	81%	70%	19%	24%	0%	4%	0%	2%
	51	19	1,908	95%	93%	5%	5%	0%	1%	0%	1%
	52	19	879	95%	90%	5%	7%	0%	2%	0%	1%
SARASOTA	53	11	680	91%	86%	9%	11%	0%	0%	0%	2%
	54	13	1,318	92%	96%	8%	1%	0%	1%	0%	2%
	55	10	2,014	90%	89%	10%	8%	0%	1%	0%	2%
	56	10	12,600	100%	92%	0%	5%	0%	1%	0%	2%
ST. JOHNS	57	22	278	41%	34%	59%	65%	0%	0%	0%	1%
	58	22	549	86%	83%	14%	15%	0%	0%	0%	2%
	59	17	613	100%	98%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%
	60	15	1,871	73%	74%	27%	23%	0%	1%	0%	2%
VOLUSIA	61	24	720	58%	41%	42%	57%	0%	1%	0%	2%
	62	16	551	56%	42%	6%	5%	13%	0%	25%	53%
	63	22	1,615	91%	80%	0%	7%	0%	1%	9%	13%
	64	17	914	76%	65%	24%	32%	0%	1%	0%	2%
	65	28	1,593	85%	90%	15%	8%	0%	0%	0%	1%

NOTE: Data for schools 40 and 56 reflect cumulative, unduplicated student counts.

Source: Based on data provided by schools and the Department of Education.

Appendix D
Response From the Department of Education

In accordance with the provisions of s. 11.45(7)(d), F.S., a list of preliminary and tentative review findings was submitted to the Commissioner of the Department of Education for his review and response.

The Commissioner's written response is reprinted herein beginning on page 63.

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Frank T. Brogan
Commissioner of Education

March 27, 1996

Mr. John W. Turcotte, Director
Office of Program Policy Analysis and
Government Accountability
Room 312, Claude Pepper Building
Tallahassee, Florida 32301

Dear Mr. Turcotte:

We have received and reviewed the report entitled: *The Implementation and Impact of Blueprint 2000 Administered by the Department of Education*. The findings in the report are consistent with the anecdotal information we are receiving from the Division of Public Schools regarding the focus of school plans on student achievement, the perception that statewide school improvement efforts give a framework to local initiatives, that local evaluations may not be consistently appropriate statewide, that membership balances on school advisory councils (SAC) continue to be problematic for some schools, and that schools are not aware of, or do not take advantage of, statewide flexibility in their planning efforts.

We appreciated your affirmation of the continued need for our technical assistance efforts in the areas stated above. Since we have already developed and delivered much of the training and assistance recommended, we will be even more diligent in our delivery of these resources.

In Chapter V, Conclusions and Recommendations, we offer some alternatives for your consideration. You may wish to consider recommending that districts take a more active role in supporting school level changes. For example, the issue of student mobility is not new to districts, and it is important that districts assist schools in continuing to address their local accountability for these students--especially for those students whose mobility is intradistrict.

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Further, districts are responsible for local communications. Some of the confusion about the possibility of long range plans with annual evaluations as opposed to year long plans may refer to district, not state, directives. We will, however, continue to work with districts to remedy these situations.

We were gratified by your confirmation that school boards and district administrators are taking the lead in establishing expectations and initiatives; it means they are internalizing the types of systemic reform Florida needs. We will continue to assist them to take on more responsibility for helping schools to evaluate their plans appropriately.

We believe the role of the Department is one of a partner with stakeholders in local improvement efforts and hope that this partnering aspect could receive an increased prominence in the final document. As partners we will continue to provide technical assistance to districts and schools as they locally implement reform initiatives.

I want to congratulate you on a most comprehensive draft. It is the obvious result of a great deal of thought, time, and effort. My staff and I are prepared to give serious consideration to addressing the recommendations in the final report.

Sincerely,

Frank T. Brogan

Frank T. Brogan
Commissioner of Education

cc: Robert Bedford
Wayne Pierson
David M. Harlan Jr.
Robert Connors

Appendix E
Response From the Florida Commission on Education Reform and Accountability

In accordance with the provisions of s. 11.45(7)(d), F.S., a list of preliminary and tentative review findings was submitted to the Executive Director of the Florida Commission on Education Reform and Accountability for his review and response.

The Executive Director's written response is reprinted herein beginning on page 66.

The Florida Commission on
Education Reform and Accountability

124 Collins Building • Tallahassee, FL 32399-0400 • (904) 922-7174 • SunCom 292-7174 • FAX (904) 922-7179

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Michael C. Biance, Ed. D.
Executive Director

March 28, 1996

John Turcotte, Director
Office of Program Policy Analysis
and Government Accountability
111 West Madison Street
Claude Pepper Building, Room 312
Tallahassee, Florida 32302

Dear Mr. Turcotte:

On behalf of the Florida Commission on Education Reform and Accountability I would like to thank you for the work of the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability. The report "The Implementation and Impact of Blueprint 2000 Administered by the Department of Education" has provided valuable input to the Commission.

The recommendations to the Commission will be considered by the Commission Oversight Committee. The first recommendation regarding the composition of the school advisory councils has been a concern of the Commission and is included in its legislative recommendations. The second recommendation could be included in the next revision of the Feedback Report format.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond and for your continued support.

Sincerely,

Michael C. Biance

Michael C. Biance, Ed.D.
Executive Director

MCB/se

cc: Commission Members
Cabinet Aides

REPORT NO. 95-54

THE FLORIDA LEGISLATURE

OFFICE OF PROGRAM POLICY ANALYSIS AND GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION AND IMPACT OF BLUEPRINT 2000 IN FIVE SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND NINETEEN SCHOOLS EVALUATED

April 30, 1996

The Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability was established by the 1994 Florida Legislature to play a major role in reviewing the performance of state agencies under performance-based budgeting and to increase the visibility and usefulness of performance audits. The Office was staffed by transferring the Program Audit Division staff of the Auditor General's Office to the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability. The Office is a unit of the Office of the Auditor General but operates independently and reports to the Legislature.

This Office conducts studies and issues a variety of reports, such as policy analyses, justification reviews, program evaluations, and performance audits. These reports provide in-depth analyses of individual state programs and functions. Reports may focus on a wide variety of issues, such as:

- Whether a program is effectively serving its intended purpose;
- Whether a program is operating within current revenue resources;
- Goals, objectives, and performance measures used to monitor and report program accomplishments;
- Structure and design of a program to accomplish its goals and objectives; and
- Alternative methods of providing program services or products.

The objective of these reports is to provide accurate, reliable information that the Legislature or an agency can use to improve public programs.

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Permission is granted to reproduce this report.

April 30, 1996

The President of the Senate,
the Speaker of the House of Representatives,
and the Joint Legislative Auditing Committee

I have directed that a Supplementary Report be made to accompany the Report of the Implementation and Impact of Blueprint 2000. The results of the review are presented to you in this report. This supplementary report was made as a part of an ongoing program of performance auditing as mandated by Section 11.51(1), Florida Statutes.

Respectfully yours,

John W. Turcotte
Director

SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION AND IMPACT OF BLUEPRINT 2000 IN FIVE SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND 19 SCHOOLS

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Introduction, Scope, and Methodology

Introduction

Since the 1983 school year, Florida's total public school full-time equivalent student count has increased from 1,627,888 to a projected 2,369,871 for 1996-97, a 46% increase. By the year 2000, the Legislature intends that Florida will establish a system of school improvement and educational accountability based on the performance of students and educational programs [s. 229.591, F.S.]. In 1991, the Legislature created Florida's system for school improvement and accountability, referred to as Blueprint 2000, the latest in a series of school improvement efforts dating back to the early 1970s. Blueprint 2000 is based on the philosophy that communities and schools collaborate to prepare children and families for children's success in schools. Its primary purpose is to return the responsibility for education to those closest to the students, that is, the schools, teachers, and parents. The Legislature's intent is that the state will no longer dictate to local schools and districts the processes or programs to be followed. Instead, under Blueprint 2000, schools will demonstrate that they have made progress toward the state's educational goals following their own school improvement plans. Schools, with the assistance of district or school advisory councils comprised of local stakeholders such as administrators, parents, teachers, and business and community representatives determine what their specific needs are and develop a school improvement plan that details the initiatives schools will implement to make progress toward achieving the state's education goals.

Scope and Methodology

This report reviews the implementation and impact of Blueprint 2000 and provides in-depth information for five selected school districts (Alachua, Monroe, Orange, Sarasota, and Washington) and 19 schools within these districts. The information pertains to the school improvement process, school improvement plans, school advisory councils, and school improvement initiatives.

This is the third in a series of studies that reviews the implementation of Blueprint 2000. In a separate report, we provide general conclusions on the implementation and impact of Blueprint 2000 based on our field visits. [1] We visited these schools in September and October 1995, and interviewed school board members, superintendents, district administrators, district staff, principals/directors, school advisory council chairs, and teachers. In addition, we conducted teacher and school advisory council focus groups to gather further information on their perspectives.

Report Organization

The district and school profiles contain specific information about the implementation and impact of Blueprint 2000 collected during our field visits to the Alachua, Monroe, Orange, Sarasota, and Washington school districts. Preceding each school profile is district background information; a summary of the district's Blueprint 2000 implementation efforts and impacts on the students, teachers, and school administration; and brief highlights of various school improvement initiatives. The school profiles provide information on the school improvement process, stakeholder perceptions on the school improvement process, school improvement plans, impact of school improvement initiatives, and examples of school improvement initiatives.

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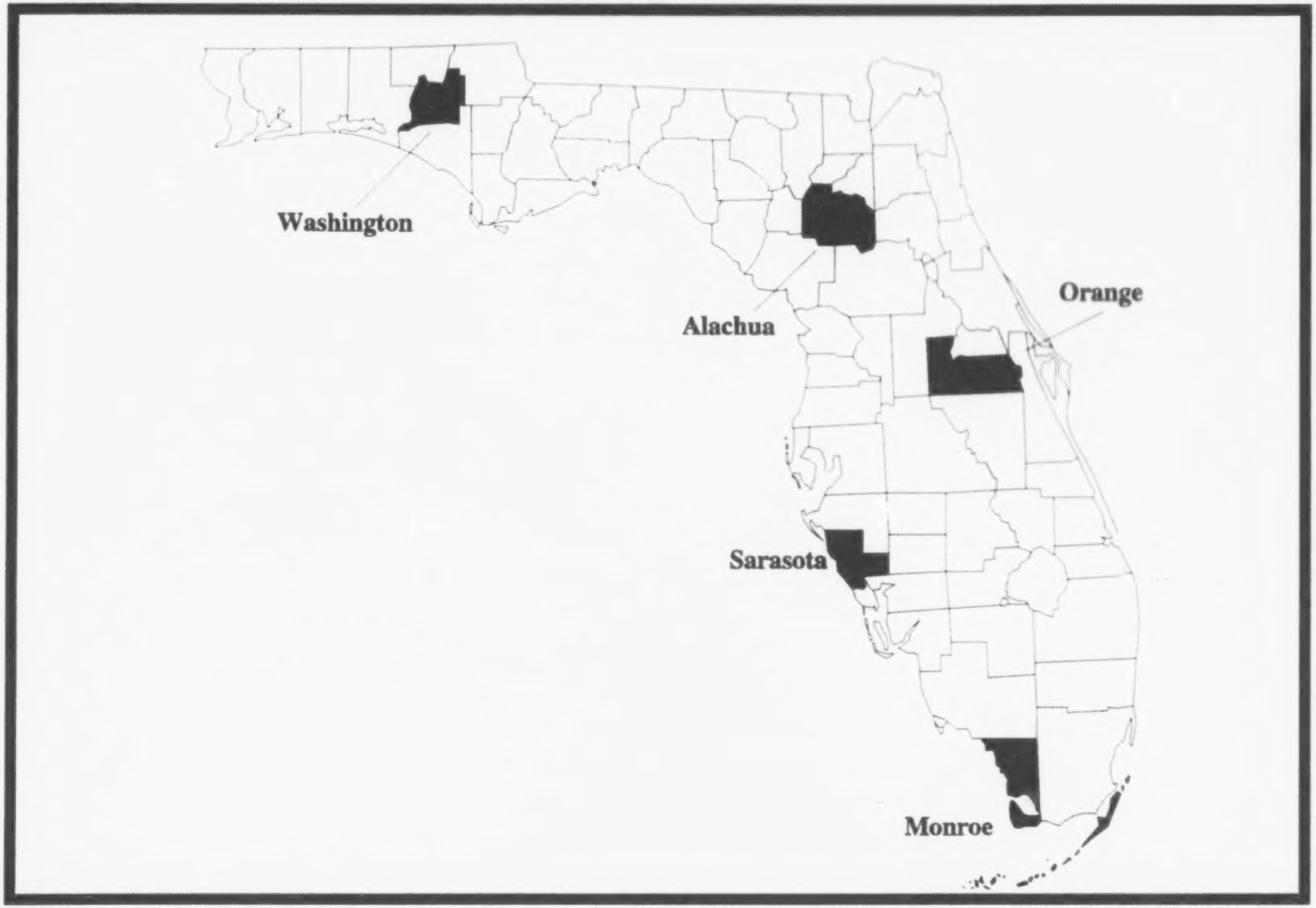
[1] Report 95-53 provides general conclusions on the implementation and impact of Blueprint 2000. In addition, in February 1994, the Office of the Auditor General published four reports pertaining to Blueprint 2000: Report Nos. 12243, 12244, 12245, and 12246. These four reports are based on fieldwork conducted during the 1993-94 school year and review the implementation of Blueprint 2000 by state agencies and in five selected school districts. In October 1994, the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability also published two reports; Report Nos. 94-08 and 94-09 focus on the mid-year review process of five additional school districts and 22 schools during the 1993-94 school year.

Exhibit 1
School Districts Visited


Washington
Alachua
Orange
Sarasota
Monroe

Source: Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability.

Alachua County School District

In October 1995, we reviewed the impact of Blueprint 2000 in the Alachua County School District. Located in north central Florida, Alachua County has a population of approximately 193,879 and is the 19th largest county in Florida. Alachua County residents have a diverse racial and ethnic background. Approximately 78% of residents are white, 19% are African American and 3% are of other racial backgrounds. Approximately 4% of all Alachua County residents are Hispanic. Half of the households in Alachua County have an annual income of $22,084 or less, compared to $27,483 for the state. In addition, 24% of the population in Alachua County lives below the poverty level; Alachua County has the eighth highest poverty rate in the state.

About half of the county's population resides in Gainesville, the location of the University of Florida. In 1992, 53% of the county's total population was between the ages of 18-44, the highest percentage in the state. Alachua County residents are among the most educated in the state; approximately 35% of the residents age 25 or older are college graduates. While the University of Florida is a major employer of Alachua County residents, many persons are employed by various small businesses, such as restaurants, that serve the university community.

Implementation of Blueprint 2000 in Alachua County School District

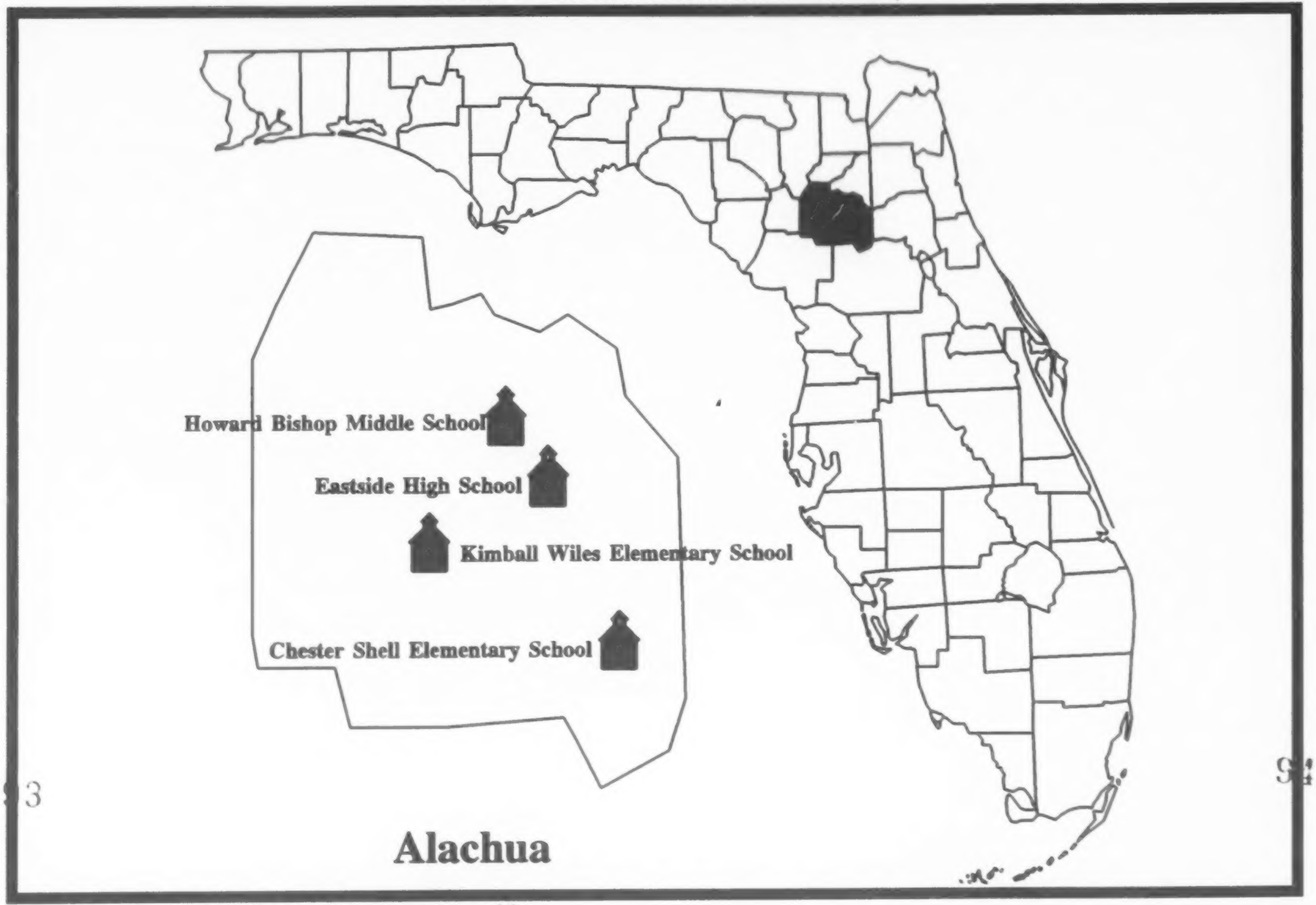
The four schools we visited in Alachua County School District are involved in several activities they believe will result in needed school improvements. The 1994-95 school improvement plans of each of the four schools include strategies relative to all seven of the state's education goal areas. Stakeholders indicate their schools are concentrating on improving reading, writing, and math skills; improving problem solving and critical thinking skills; improving transition and orientation of students; reducing disciplinary actions; increasing parental involvement; and increasing multicultural awareness, interaction, and cooperation. Stakeholders provided evidence such as survey results, data on disciplinary actions, and test scores resulting from systematic evaluations to demonstrate some school improvements. Teachers report they perceive improvements occurred, but data are not available to confirm their perceptions. Many of the projects are in the process of being implemented, and stakeholders believe the full impact of improvements may be best measured over the long-term. Schools often did not have methods to collect data needed to evaluate these projects. Such information would enable schools to make changes needed to meet their objectives in both the short- and long-term. In August 1995, the Alachua County School Board adopted expectations for school improvement plans that include specific requirements for objectives and evaluation plans. These directives may better ensure that schools develop clearer, more systematic evaluation methods to determine the impact of school improvement projects.

District and School Demographics

Alachua County School District is the 20th largest school district in the state with 28,812 prekindergarten through 12th grade students and 39 schools. Based on the latest information available from the Department of Education, approximately 59% of students are white, 36% are African American, and 3% are Hispanic, compared to state averages of 59%, 25%, and 15%, respectively. One indicator often used to measure a school district's poverty rate is the percentage of students eligible to receive free or reduced lunches. In 1994, the average percentage of students eligible to receive free or reduced lunches was 44% in Alachua County and 43% statewide. In 1994, the mobility rates in Alachua County (i.e., percentage of students who transferred into or out of the school during the school year) were 29% for elementary schools, 22% for middle schools, and 27% for high schools. The state median mobility rates in 1994 were 36% for elementary schools, 31% for middle schools, and 33% for high schools. In addition, 1,991 kindergarten through 12th grade students attended non-public schools in Alachua County in 1994-95.

We visited four public schools in Alachua County: two elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school. The largest school we visited is Eastside High School with 1,471 students and the smallest school is Chester Shell Elementary School with 413 students. We also visited Wiles Elementary with 934 students and Howard Bishop Middle School with 1,135 students. See Exhibit 3 for demographic information on the students attending each school we visited. See Exhibit 4 for student performance data for each school.

Exhibit 2
Location of Schools Visited in Alachua County


Howard Bishop Middle School
Eastside High School
Kimball Wiles Elementary School
Chester Shell Elementary School
Alachua

Source: Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability.

Exhibit 3

1995 Student Information

School	Number of Students	Percent Eligible to Receive Free/Reduced Lunch	White	African American	Hispanic	Other	Mobility Rate of Students
Chester Shell Elementary	413	73%	62%	37%	1%	0%	29
Eastside High	1,471	35%	48%	46%	1%	5%	25
Howard Bishop Middle	1,135	53%	44%	52%	3%	2%	25
Kimball Wiles Elementary	934	36%	66%	28%	3%	2%	27

Note: Information for free/reduced lunches and mobility rates is based on 1994-95 school year data.

Source: Based on information provided by the Department of Education and individual schools.

Exhibit 4

Student Performance Data

School	94 NRT Reading or HSCT Communication Scores	95 NRT Reading or HSCT Communication Scores	94 NRT or HSCT Mathematics Scores	95 NRT or HSCT Mathematics Scores	94 Florida Writing Scores	95 Florida Writing Scores
Chester Shell Elementary	28%	37%	36%	53%	19%	11%
Kimball Wiles Elementary	63%	68%	75%	74%	42%	48%
Howard W. Bishop Middle	47%	54%	51%	53%	40%	58%
Eastside High	94%	91%	80%	82%	71%	81%

Note: For reading and mathematics in elementary and middle schools, data reflects percentage of students' scores above the 50th national percentile on Reading Comprehension and Mathematics Concepts/Applications subtests on national referenced tests (NRT). Data for high schools consists of passing scores on the Communications and Mathematics sections of the High School Competency Tests (HSCT) for first time test takers during the fall administration. Writing scores reflect the percentage of students scoring "3" and above on a scale of 0 to 6 on the Florida Writes assessment. This table includes student performance data for elementary, middle, and high schools visited.

Source: Based on information provided by the Department of Education.

School Board and District Administration

School board members and district administrators in Alachua County School District generally provide direction, oversight, and assistance to help schools improve and implement the provisions of Blueprint 2000. While individual school board members vary in their particular involvement in the school improvement process, board members report they read the school improvement plans and are often involved in public forums where plans are discussed. District administrators review all school improvement plans before school board members receive them for final consideration. District administrators also provide technical assistance to help schools develop their plans and monitor the implementation of plans after board approval. District administrators, with the assistance of school board members, developed the Planning Guide for School Improvement, also referred to as "the Green Book," to assist schools in developing their school improvement plans.

During the 1994-95 school year, the Alachua County School Board adopted district policies relative to the implementation of school improvement initiatives in district schools. For example, the board adopted a policy limiting school advisory council (SAC) membership to two years and specifying that members serve on no more than one SAC. This policy is designed to facilitate improvement by ensuring more persons are involved in the school improvement process. Some people are concerned that these changes may cause unneeded turnover and affect a SAC's continuity. In August 1995, the board adopted a list of expectations for school improvement plans. Schools must write objectives that require meaningful increases in student achievement for adequate progress. In addition, schools must write evaluation plans with adequate progress statements that use appropriate data. In developing their 1996-97 school improvement plans, schools will be required to follow these guidelines.

School Improvement Process

School Advisory Councils. The 1994-95 SACs at the schools we visited ranged in size from 13 to 18 members. SAC meetings are held in the evening or after school, once or twice a month. Each council held from 6 to 15 meetings in 1994-95. All

SACs include teachers, parents, and business/community members. Members regularly attended meetings, except for a few business/community members, who had conflicts with other responsibilities. Turnover is not considered a problem for implementation of school improvement, and is attributed to the time required, especially for parent and community volunteers.

Perceptions on the School Improvement Process. Stakeholders (district administrators, school board members, principals, teachers, and SAC members) indicate that schools would have implemented many school improvement projects they identified even without Blueprint 2000. However, Blueprint 2000 provides schools with a focus and a systematic format and procedures for school improvement initiatives. In addition, some stakeholders indicate that Blueprint 2000 increases stakeholders' participation in school activities and decision-making. Stakeholders perceive that Blueprint 2000 provides additional funding to facilitate school improvement initiatives.

Stakeholders identified the factors that help schools make improvements. Stakeholders reported increased teacher participation through school-based decision making, school improvement committees, and workshops as factors that help schools make needed improvements. Faculty "buy-in" to the improvement process is considered key to the success of school improvement initiatives. Other factors stakeholders identified include communication and team work among school staff; increased flexibility to allocate resources; waivers to school board policies; basing decisions on a thorough assessment of school needs; and training on the Blueprint 2000 process. Teachers, in particular, believe the support and assistance of district staff, especially in providing clear definitions of policies and expectations through the district's Planning Guide for School Improvement, facilitates their school improvement efforts. SAC members and staff at some schools also perceive that increased parental involvement and assistance from business/community members contribute to the success of their school improvement efforts. One SAC Chair commented that Blueprint 2000 enables administrators, school board members, and parents as a group to be involved in school improvement initiatives.

Stakeholders mentioned two primary factors that hinder school improvement at the schools we visited, time constraints and lack of resources. Stakeholders identified time demands, particularly of teachers, as restraining school improvement efforts. Staff at one school complained of the time and effort required to change their school improvement plan to meet district formatting requirements. Teachers at that school believe that Blueprint 2000's statutory time lines provide inadequate time for development and revision of school improvement plans. Some individuals are also frustrated by frequent changes in school improvement requirements resulting from the revision of Blueprint 2000 documents, modifications to district requirements, and changes in school board policies. Several stakeholders reported that they cannot make some improvements because they lack the financial resources. For example, one school has vandalism problems and wants to erect a fence, but cannot afford to do so. At another school, staff indicate they lack the funds to provide needed teacher inservice opportunities or to take students on educational field trips.

School Improvement Plans

Goals, Objectives, Strategies. Although the 1994-95 school improvement plans of the four schools we visited include all seven state education goals, schools vary in the specific areas they plan to improve. The schools we visited most often concentrate on reducing the number of disciplinary actions; increasing training or inservice for teachers/staff; increasing adult literacy; improving the transition of students/orientation; and improving school safety. The school improvement plans describe numerous strategies or improvement initiatives schools plan to implement to achieve their objectives. The following improvement strategies are described in two or more plans:

- Agreements/cooperation with other agencies; parental/community involvement activities; provide training to parents; publications/information dissemination;
- Increased use of computers in the curriculum; purchase/use applied software;
- Teacher/staff training;
- Establish committees, study groups, planning groups; develop and/or conduct surveys; planning, exploring, assessing activities;
- Team projects/teaming of students/cooperative learning;
- Develop incentives and/or academic recognition activities; and
- Other non-academic program development.

The school profiles that follow the district overview section provide additional information about school improvement plans at the four schools we visited.

Trends in Plans Over Time. We reviewed the 1993-94, 1994-95, and 1995-96 school improvement plans of four schools. While plans for the 1993-94 school year do not define adequate progress, all four schools describe adequate progress in their 1994-95 and 1995-96 plans. However, for three of the four schools, the 1995-96 improvement plans identify district goals rather than school-specific goals. Thus, we could not determine the benefit the schools will derive from these goals. In August 1995, the school board identified specific requirements for objectives and evaluation plans. These requirements are designed to ensure that schools develop school-specific goals and objectives, and provide more systematic methods of evaluating the impact of school improvement projects.

Impact of School Improvement

Students. Stakeholders (district administrators, school board members, principals, teachers, and SAC members) believe schools are implementing many school improvement initiatives and activities that are generally consistent with Blueprint 2000 goals and objectives. At the four schools we visited, the most frequently perceived improvements include improved reading, writing, and math scores; increased problem solving and critical thinking skills; and improved transition of students/orientation. Other improvements mentioned at two or more schools are reduced number of disciplinary actions; increased parental involvement; and improved multicultural awareness, interaction, and cooperation. Stakeholders provided evidence such as survey results, data on disciplinary actions, and test scores resulting from systematic evaluations to illustrate some improvements. However, in most cases, teacher observation is the primary indicator used to illustrate improvements. Schools are in the process of implementing some of the school improvement initiatives, and it may be too early to measure their impact. In some cases, schools have not developed a systematic method of evaluating the impact of their efforts.

Teachers. Teachers at the four schools vary in their level of involvement in the development of school improvement projects. Teachers generally serve on at least one school improvement goal committee, develop improvement strategies, and provide this information to the SAC either through summaries and recommendations or through committee members who serve on the SAC. In general, teachers at the four schools do not believe that the time and effort they spend planning and implementing school improvement activities takes too much time from their teaching activities. However, they report that it takes time from their class planning and from their time after school and on weekends. Several teachers involved in the development of school improvement plans indicated Blueprint 2000 requires too much time and paperwork for various reasons, such as year-end evaluations, SAC meetings, and developing outcome measures and related strategies for school improvement plans.

Teachers at one school perceive that Blueprint 2000 gives them a voice in school-based decision making. By helping to develop and implement school improvement plans, teachers believe they have an opportunity to create a vision for the school's future. Many staff members perceive that Blueprint 2000 provides a common focus statewide for teachers who believe stakeholders are finally speaking the same language when discussing improvement initiatives. Teachers are volunteering to participate in school improvement committees, projects, and workshops. Many educators appear enthusiastic about the results of the strategies they helped initiate.

School Administration. Under Blueprint 2000, stakeholders do not perceive that the school board allocates resources to schools much differently than in the past. Administrators at the schools we visited report that schools always had some flexibility in allocating resources. For example, a principal indicated that her school has always used its instructional budget flexibly to purchase furniture, textbooks, instructional materials, and supplies. In addition, schools received $8 per student in lottery enhancement funds for school improvement and district advanced placement funds, which vary by school. Stakeholders at the four schools also do not perceive that Blueprint 2000 impacts how their schools allocate resources. However, principals solicit input from SAC members and staff in making decisions, including those involving allocating resources.

Highlights of School Improvement Initiatives. The four schools we visited in Alachua County School District are implementing numerous improvement projects. This section provides brief highlights of a few of these improvements:

- **Blueprint 2000 Goals 1, 3, and 4, School Readiness/Student Performance/Learning Environment: Increased Readiness to Start Middle School.** Howard Bishop Middle School implemented an orientation camp for incoming 6th grade students designed to help these students make a smooth transition from elementary to middle school. The program, Bishop Leaders Attaining Zeal In Education (BLAZE), includes a four-day camp to help students: (1) become acquainted with other students, teachers, and staff; (2) become familiar with the campus and routine; (3) build self-esteem; (4) learn stress management; (5) develop communication skills; (6) develop decision-making skills; and (7) develop cooperation skills. Participation in the camp has grown significantly, from 50 students in 1991 to over 300 students in 1995. Teachers observed changes in student attitudes at the beginning of the school year compared to past years; students appear to be more enthusiastic and less fearful in the new school environment. The school is in the process of developing monitoring and evaluation procedures for the program.

- **Blueprint 2000 Goal 5 and 3, School Safety/Student Performance: Reduction in the Number of Absences**. Eastside High School had a significant problem with unexcused absences and forged excuses. Thus, during the 1994-95 school year the SAC developed an attendance policy designed to decrease the number of student absences from school by placing more responsibility on parents and students. The policy allows up to nine excused/unexcused student absences from class per semester, excluding absences due to school field trips. If a student is absent more than nine times during a semester, he or she loses class credit. A committee of students, faculty members, and parents reviews appeals to the policy. The school began enforcing the policy during the 1995-96 school year, thus, it may be too early to measure the full impact of the new policy. However, SAC members (including teachers, community members, and parents) indicate that teachers are observing fewer incidents of students "skipping" school, thus improving the overall ability of these students to learn. In addition, administrators indicate that it has streamlined the attendance process since excuses are no longer required or collected.

- **Blueprint 2000 Goal 3, Student Performance: Improved Academic Performance (Math Science, Writing, Communication, Social, and Critical Thinking Skills)**. Kimball Wiles Elementary School implemented a variety of strategies including curriculum changes, teaming, and special academic projects to improve the overall academic skills of students. The school integrated the curriculum across subjects (e.g., writing about what students learned in other subjects such as science), integrated technology into the classroom, teamed students in classroom projects, placed special emphasis on math and science, developed classroom projects to learn and apply skills (e.g., creating a country store to learn to apply math and science knowledge and operate a small business), and provided additional staff training. Overall standardized test scores and Florida Writes scores have increased. Teachers observed that students are better at problem solving and critical thinking skills than in the past and individual performance evaluations have improved.

- **Blueprint 2000 Goals 5 and 3, School Safety/Student Performance: Improved Safety/Discipline**. Chester Shell Elementary implemented the "Too Good for Drugs" Program, designed for K-5 students, to promote improved safety/discipline. The program's curriculum includes four lesson components that are designed to increase students' self awareness, decision making, saying "no" to potentially dangerous situations, and substance awareness. The pre/post-tests administered to students participating in the program show that student performance on lesson component areas increased during the 1994-95 school year. The school-wide average rose from 69% on the pre-test to 93% on the post-test. Teachers also observed increases in student awareness, responsibility, and time spent on-task. The number of disciplinary referrals also decreased during the 1994-95 school year.

School Profiles

The following school profiles contain specific information about the implementation and impact of Blueprint 2000 at each of the schools we visited in Alachua County. Each school profile provides information on school advisory councils, school improvements cited by stakeholder groups, school improvement plans, and stakeholder perceptions on Blueprint 2000.

Alachua County School District

School Profiles

Kimball Wiles Elementary School

Chester Shell Elementary School

Howard E. Bishop Middle School

Eastside High School

KIMBALL WILES ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROFILE

SCHOOL DESCRIPTION	
SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS, AS IDENTIFIED BY STAKEHOLDERS	Stakeholders identified characteristics they believed should be considered when examining the improvement initiatives at the school. These characteristics include: ■ Students attending Wiles Elementary live in the neighborhood surrounding the school which includes homes with values ranging from $40,000 to $350,000; ■ Many students are bused from housing projects across town. These children arrive at school after a half hour bus ride; ■ The school has high parent participation in school activities, primarily from families of children who live in the neighborhood surrounding the school; ■ Students attending the school perform well academically; and ■ The school is one of ten schools in the state recognized by the National Science Foundation and Department of Education for innovations in its curriculum, especially in the areas of Science and Math.
NUMBER OF STUDENTS AND TEACHERS IN 1995	■ 934 students ■ 52 teachers

KIMBALL WILES ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROFILE

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS		
NAME OF GROUP FUNCTIONING AS SAC	School Improvement Team (SIT)	
MEMBERSHIP COMPOSITION OF 1994-95 SAC ACCORDING TO MEMBERSHIP LIST PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL (N = 16)	Administrators:	1
	Teachers:	5
	Support Staff:	1
	Parents:	5
	Business/Community:	4
SAC MEETINGS	Meetings were held following the P.T.A. meetings or at 3:30 p.m. The SAC met ten times during the 1994-95 school year.	
SAC MEMBER ATTENDANCE	According to meeting minutes, teachers, support staff, and parents attended most of the ten SAC meetings held during 1994-95. Of the five teachers on the SAC, two attended all but one meeting and three attended approximately half of the meetings. All five parent members attended at least seven of the ten meetings. Three business/community representatives generally attended half of the meetings. According to the principal, a fourth business/community representative attended several meetings, but was not recorded on the attendance roster because he arrived after attendance was taken.	
	(continued)	

KIMBALL WILES ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROFILE

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS	
NEW SAC MEMBERS IN 1995	Compared to the 1994-95 SAC, 5 of 17 1995-96 SAC members had not previously served on the school advisory council. Turnover of SAC members was perceived as having little impact on the SAC's ability to develop and implement its school improvement plan. Reasons cited for SAC members leaving the SAC prior to their terms ending or for not returning the next year are (1) parents change jobs and families move out of school attendance zone; and (2) the time commitment is too much for some members.
INVOLVEMENT OF SCHOOL STAFF	The SAC breaks up into goal committees and all teachers and instructional staff are assigned to one of these committees. Non-instructional staff may choose to attend these meetings also. According to the school principal, goal committees are the "worker bees" of the SAC.

KIMBALL WILES ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROFILE

PERCEPTIONS ON SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS	
MOST POSITIVE CONTRIBUTIONS OF BLUEPRINT 2000	■ Increased involvement of teachers, parents, and business/community members in school activities; ■ Provided a focus, format, and procedures for school improvement activities; and ■ Provided some additional funding.
NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF BLUEPRINT 2000	■ Required more time to write objectives in terms of outcomes that can be measured; and ■ Trying to increase minority parental involvement has been difficult.
FACTORS THAT HAVE HELPED THE SCHOOL IMPROVE	■ Leadership of the principal; ■ Assistance from the district office and the district school improvement guide book (referred to as the "Green Book"); ■ Seeing the results of the strategies implemented; ■ Writing long-term goals rather than short-term goals; ■ Flexibility in making resource allocations based on school improvement initiatives; ■ Training; ■ Conducting a thorough needs assessment; ■ The assistance of business partners and volunteers; and ■ The positive, team approach of teachers and SIT members at the school.

(continued)

KIMBALL WILES ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROFILE

PERCEPTIONS ON SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS	
FACTORS THAT HAVE HINDERED SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT	■ Plans must be written each year, thus schools are not encouraged to have a long-term focus; ■ Not enough money to implement some school improvement projects that teachers, SIT members, and the principal believe would help improve student performance (e.g., extended school days, lower teacher to pupil ratios, and installing a fence to protect school from vandals); ■ In previous years the school tried to include too may strategies and was somewhat overwhelmed by time requirements. Now stakeholders are more focused; and ■ A new school board policy that will limit the terms of SIT members to two years may cause SIT member turnover and result in a less representative school improvement team.

KIMBALL WILES ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROFILE

1994-95 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	
STATE GOALS INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	All seven state education goals were included in the 1994-95 school improvement plan.
OBJECTIVES INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	The 1994-95 school improvement plan included several specific improvement objectives in the following categories: ■ Improve the transition and readiness of students; ■ Improve career preparedness of students; ■ Improve problem solving and critical thinking skills of students; ■ Improve communication with parents; ■ Improve school safety; and ■ Improve adult literacy.
STRATEGIES INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	The 1994-95 school improvement plan included numerous school improvement strategies or activities in the following general areas: ■ Implement specific academic projects; pilot projects; new or modified curriculum; ■ Parental and community involvement activities; publications/information dissemination; provide training/materials to parents; ■ Technology/equipment purchase/computer hardware; increase use of computers in the curriculum; purchase/use applied software; ■ Alternative assessment; ■ Teaming/cooperative learning; ■ Teacher/staff training; ■ Establish committees, study groups, planning groups; planning, exploring, and assessing options; develop or conduct surveys; coordinate school activities; and ■ Develop incentives and/or academic recognition activities.

(continued)

KIMBALL WILES ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROFILE

1994-95 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

ADEQUATE PROGRESS AND EVALUATION	■ The plan includes both a description of how the school will determine adequate progress and methods of evaluation. Adequate progress and evaluation procedures were defined at the objective level. For example, for a school objective relating to improving school safety, the school improvement plan indicated the results of the actions would be used to determine whether the school achieved its objective and if the results are consistent with the shared vision and mission of Kimball Wiles Elementary School.
TRENDS IN PLANS	The school's 1993-94 school improvement plan identifies the state's seven Blueprint 2000 goals as school goals. The 1994-95 and 1995-96 school improvement plans appear to be becoming school-specific and address seven and six of the state goals. The plans for the three years reviewed generally show improvement in four areas: ■ Objectives describing results and outcomes; ■ Describing results/outcomes in measurable terms; ■ Including time lines and benchmarks for outcomes; and ■ Describing evaluation procedures. The school's 1994-95 and 1995-96 plans include evaluation procedures and definitions of adequate progress.

KIMBALL WILES ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROFILE

IMPACT OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES ON SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION	
WAIVERS	No waivers were requested or received by the school.
RESOURCE ALLOCATION	The school has always been able to use its instructional budget flexibly to purchase furniture, textbooks, instructional materials, and supplies. The school's instructional budget for 1995-96 is approximately $45,000. The principal uses the school improvement plan to help make resource allocation decisions. It was perceived that Blueprint 2000 has had no impact on how the school board allocated resources to the school or how the resources are allocated within the school.
ADDITIONAL FUNDS	Kimball Wiles has received funds from a number of sources. In 1994-95, the school received a $360,000 retrofit grant from the Department of Education to wire the main physical facility and portable buildings for networking. In 1995-96, the school received a $21,000 Technology Incentive Grant for equipment and teacher training and a $5,000 National Science Foundation Grant for the purchase of math/science instructional materials and funding the school's Science Technology Environment Math (STEM) exposition. The school also received approximately $5,000 in advanced placement funds from the district to support school improvement efforts and has applied for a $4,500 grant from the National Science Foundation as part of the Discover School Program. In addition, the district awarded mini-grants in the amounts of $8,000 for 1994-95 and $10,000 for 1995-96 to teachers at Kimball Wiles for the enhancement of instructional programs. During 1995-96, the school is applying for a $4,500 grant from the National Science Foundation as part of the Discover School Program.
DECISION-MAKING	The principal solicits the input of School Improvement Team (SIT) members and staff in making decisions, including those involving the allocation of school resources. The school principal indicated that this is how she has always made decisions.

KIMBALL WILES ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROFILE

EXAMPLES OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES

School Improvement Cited	Examples of Initiatives	Description and Impact of Initiatives	Relationship to BP 2000 Goals
Improved Academic Performance of Students (Math, Science, Writing, Communication, Social, and Critical Thinking Skills)	Various Strategies including: ■ Curriculum changes; ■ Teaming; ■ Integration of Technology into the curriculum; and ■ Staff training.	The school has implemented a variety of strategies including curriculum changes, teaming, and special academic projects. The school has integrated the curriculum across subjects (e.g., writing about what students learned in other subjects such as science), integrated technology into the classroom, teamed students in classroom projects, emphasized math and science, developed classroom projects to learn and apply skills (e.g., creating a country store to learn to apply math and science knowledge and operate a small business), and provided additional staff training. Overall standardized test scores and Florida Writes scores have increased. In 1995, 48% of students scored a three or more on the Florida Writes test, compared to 42% in 1994. Teachers have begun to observe that students are better at problem solving and critical thinking skills than in the past, and individual performance evaluations have improved. Some teachers we spoke to indicated that standardized tests may not truly measure the impact of the improvements students are making. According to the school principal, the school is exploring other methods of evaluating its accomplishments.	Goal 3 (continued)

School Improvement Cited	Examples of Initiatives	Description and Impact of Initiatives	Relationship to BP 2000 Goals
Improved Safety/Discipline	Revised Discipline Plan	Under the new plan, the school tries to identify children with behavioral problems and use positive, consistent, and structured reinforcement and follow-through to change their short-term and long-term behavior. The new discipline plan was implemented in the 1995-96 school year. Changes in individual student discipline are reviewed at weekly staff meetings, and end-of-year evaluations are conducted. Surveys conducted by the school demonstrate that teachers are observing more orderliness in their classrooms. Long-term aggregate data on possible reductions in disciplinary referrals are not yet available. However, the school is in the process of developing a more formalized method of evaluating the program.	Goal 5
Improved Communication With Parents	Home Phoning System	The system allows the school to record a message up to five minutes in length and call parents to keep them aware of school activities. For example, the school uses the system to call parents about fund raisers. The school keeps track of the number of minutes the system was used through a computer printout provided by the district office. The school conducted a follow-up survey of parents and found that they were receiving information via the phone system. Also, the teachers are observing that parents are more involved in school activities than in the past.	No Specific Blueprint 2000 Goal

CHESTER SHELL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROFILE

SCHOOL DESCRIPTION	
SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS, AS IDENTIFIED BY STAKEHOLDERS	Stakeholders identified certain school characteristics that should be considered in examining improvement initiatives at the school. These characteristics include: ■ Located in a farming area with many residents working in Gainesville; ■ "Community school" that serves six surrounding communities; ■ Approximately 60% of the students are bused; ■ Relatively low mobility rate; ■ Many students are part of extended families; and ■ Increasing parental involvement.
NUMBER OF STUDENTS AND TEACHERS IN 1995	■ 413 students ■ 27 teachers

CHESTER SHELL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROFILE

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS		
NAME OF GROUP FUNCTIONING AS SAC	School Advisory Council (SAC)	
MEMBERSHIP COMPOSITION OF 1994-95 SAC ACCORDING TO MEMBERSHIP LIST PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL (N = 13)	Administrators:	1
	Teachers:	4
	Support Staff:	1
	Parents:	4
	Business/Community:	3
SAC MEETINGS	Meetings were held at 4:00 p.m. on Thursdays. The SAC met seven times during the 1994-95 school year.	
SAC MEMBER ATTENDANCE	During the 1994-95 school year, approximately two-thirds of the members listed on the roster attended on a regular basis. Generally, teachers and community members attended all meetings. Of the four parent members, one attended three meetings and another attended seven meetings. The educational support representative did not attend any meetings.	
NEW SAC MEMBERS IN 1995	Compared to the 1994-95 SAC, 7 of 15 1995-96 members had not previously served on the SAC. Turnover was not perceived as affecting the SAC's ability to develop and implement the school improvement plan. However, staff believe that the new school board policy limiting the length of a SAC member's term of service to two years could affect continuity in school improvement efforts. The amount of work and time involved was one frequently cited reason for SAC members leaving the SAC prior to their terms expiring or not returning the next year.	
INVOLVEMENT OF SCHOOL STAFF	Teachers are involved in site-based management at Chester Shell (e.g., the principal seeks their input when making budgetary decisions and in selecting inservice opportunities). Staff are involved in developing the school improvement plans. Each teacher serves on at least one Blueprint 2000 goal committee. Teachers do not believe that Blueprint 2000 initiatives have taken too much time away from their teaching activities. They believe that the time spent has been worth the effort.	

CHESTER SHELL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROFILE

PERCEPTIONS ON SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS	
MOST POSITIVE CONTRIBUTIONS OF BLUEPRINT 2000	■ Bringing parents and community members into the education/school planning process; ■ Promoting teamwork and cohesiveness of staff; ■ Providing continuity in curriculum; ■ Requiring a focus on academics; and ■ Providing some additional funding.
NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF BLUEPRINT 2000	■ Time required by participants to meet Blueprint 2000 requirements with no compensation in return (e.g., scheduling SAC meetings, attending SAC meetings); and ■ Frustration over understanding exactly what is expected in improving student performance and measuring improvement.
FACTORS THAT HAVE HELPED THE SCHOOL IMPROVE	■ Provision of clear definitions of policies and expectations through the district's Planning Guide for School Improvement ("Green Book"); ■ Support from district staff; ■ Basing decisions on a needs assessment; ■ Increased teacher participation in school-based decision making; and ■ Increased communication among staff members.
FACTORS THAT HAVE HINDERED SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT	■ Not enough financial resources to fully implement some school improvement initiatives (e.g., teacher in-service, student field trips); ■ Timelines for school improvement plan development and revision are too short; ■ Requirements related to school improvement plan are somewhat vague; and ■ Time and effort needed to assure the Sunshine Law requirements are followed.

CHESTER SHELL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROFILE

1994-95 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	
STATE GOALS INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	All seven state education goals were included in the 1994-95 school improvement plan.
EXAMPLES OF CATEGORIES OF OBJECTIVES INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	The 1994-95 school improvement plan included several specific objectives in the following general categories: ■ Improve the transition of students from 5th grade to middle school; ■ Increase computer competency of students; ■ Improve school safety; ■ Increase training or inservice for teachers/staff; and ■ Improve adult literacy.
EXAMPLES OF CATEGORIES OF STRATEGIES INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	The 1994-95 school improvement plan contains numerous school improvement strategies or activities in the following areas: ■ Student orientation classes; ■ Agreements/cooperation with other agencies; parental/community involvement activities; publications/information dissemination; parent training; ■ Develop, implement, modify discipline plan; ■ Teacher/staff training; ■ Purchase/use applied software; and ■ Establish committees, study groups, planning groups; needs identification/assessment activities.

(continued)

CHESTER SHELL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROFILE

1994-95 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	
ADEQUATE PROGRESS AND EVALUATION	The plan includes a description of adequate progress and evaluation procedures. For example, for a school objective related to improving the transition of students from Chester Shell Elementary into middle school, the school evaluation plan indicates the school will use "pre and post orientation test results" and a "sixth grade teacher survey on effective transitional opportunities" to evaluate their efforts.
TRENDS IN PLANS	The school's 1993-94 school improvement plan identifies the state's seven Blueprint 2000 goals as school goals. The 1994-95 and 1995-96 school improvement plans address seven and six of the state goals, respectively. However, the objectives of the plans are district goals and are not school-specific. The school's 1994-95 and 1995-96 plans include evaluation procedures and definitions of adequate progress.

CHESTER SHELL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROFILE

IMPACT OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES ON SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION	
WAIVERS	None requested.
RESOURCE ALLOCATION	The principal refers to the needs assessment provided through the school improvement plan when making resource allocation decisions. The district allocates FTE funds to the school based on the number of students; however, as additional funds (e.g., Technology Incentive Grants) become available, they are provided to schools based on their needs.
FUNDS	Teachers have received individual grants through the Chamber of Commerce for initiatives aimed at improving students' academic performance. One teacher was awarded a $250 grant in 1994. For the 1994-95 school year, the school received approximately $2,100 for its Parent Involvement Program Component. For the 1995-96 school year, the school also received approximately $2,300 through the district's Advance Placement Program Subsidy and $800 through the Safe and Drug Free Schools Program.
DECISION-MAKING	The principal solicits the input of staff and SAC members in making decisions involving the allocation of school resources. Teachers, in particular, have increased participation in the resource allocation process and in selecting inservice training opportunities.

CHESTER SHELL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROFILE

EXAMPLES OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES

School Improvement Cited	Examples of Initiatives	Description and Impact of Initiatives	Relationship to BP 2000 Goals
Increased Readiness to Start School	Parent "take-home" activity kits	The school has implemented a variety of strategies to assure that students are ready to start school. One of the initiatives involves "take-home kits" provided by the school to parents of kindergarten and first-grade students. The kits contain activities such as sorting, color identification, shape recognition, and alphabet recognition. Parents complete the activities with their child to help re-enforce readiness skills. Kindergarten teachers have observed increased readiness skills in students over the past three years. They also report that scores have improved on the Kindergarten screening tests given by the district each fall. This information is kept in individual student folders. Alachua County Kindergarten Prep Screening data indicate that the percentage of at-risk students decreased from 37% in Fall 1993 to 32.7% in Fall 1994. An at-risk student is one who does not pass at least half of the areas tested. Parent surveys also indicate that the kit activities provide a positive learning experience for students and parents.	Goals 1, 3 (continued)

School Improvement Cited	Examples of Initiatives	Description and Impact of Initiatives	Relationship to BP 2000 Goals
Improved Safety/Discipline	Mendez "Too Good for Drugs" Program	The "Too Good for Drugs" program, designed for K-5 students, is one of the strategies the school has implemented to promote improved safety/discipline. The program's curriculum includes four lesson components that are designed to increase students' self-awareness, decision making, saying no to potentially dangerous situations, and substance awareness. The pre/post-tests administered to students participating in the Mendez program show that students' performance in the lesson component areas increased during the 1994-95 school year. The school-wide average rose from 69% on the pre-test to 93% on the post-test. Teachers also observed increases in student awareness, responsibility, and time spent on-task. The documentation provided did not reflect a reduction in the number of disciplinary referrals submitted. However, teachers stated that their observations show a decline in severe rule infractions in the classroom and throughout the school.	Goals 3, 5
Increased Parental Involvement	Various Strategies including: ■ Parent workshops; and ■ Parent volunteer programs	The school has implemented a variety of strategies, including cooperating with day-care center staff to provide workshops in parenting skills, providing workshops for parents of school-age children in how to work with their children, and involving parents as school volunteers. The school documents the number of parents participating in parent involvement activities as well as the number of volunteer hours. The number of parent volunteers increased from 38 for the 1993-94 school year to 67 for 1994-95 (43% increase). Although a record of total parent volunteer hours across activities is not maintained, teachers have observed greater involvement of parents during recent years. Parent evaluation checklists indicate that parents participating in workshops found the information helpful in better preparing them to help their children in school.	Goal 3 (continued)

School Improvement Cited	Examples of Initiatives	Description and Impact of Initiatives	Relationship to BP 2000 Goals
Improved Academic Performance of Students	Computer-assisted instruction	Through computer-assisted instruction, students proceed at their own pace in identified areas where they need additional practice. Software programs in academic areas such as math and reading are used to supplement instruction. Overall, California Achievement Test (CAT) and Florida Writes scores have increased. The percentage of students scoring at or above the national median in reading on the CAT rose from 26% in 1993-94 to 34% in 1994-95. The percentage of students scoring at or above the national median in math on the CAT rose from 22% in 1993-94 to 50% in 1994-95. The students' average score on the Florida Writes rose from 1.9 in 1993-94 to 2.0 in 1994-95. Teachers observe that students are more at ease when working on the computers. They also observe that classroom participation and individual student performance on teacher-developed evaluations have improved.	Goal 3

HOWARD W. BISHOP MIDDLE SCHOOL PROFILE

SCHOOL DESCRIPTION	
SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS, AS IDENTIFIED BY STAKEHOLDERS	Stakeholders identified certain school characteristics that should be considered in examining improvement initiatives at the school. These characteristics include: ■ Many students live in lower socioeconomic housing and apartment complexes. Approximately 10% to 15% of the students are bused in from more affluent neighborhoods in Northwest Gainesville; ■ Approximately 60% to 70% of the students are transported by bus; ■ Located less than two miles away from another middle school with a similar population; ■ Relatively high mobility rate; ■ High ESE population; Center school for physically impaired; self-contained program for learning disabled; and ■ Trying to create a more user-friendly environment encouraging the involvement of minority parents.
NUMBER OF STUDENTS AND TEACHERS IN 1995	■ 1,135 students ■ 64 teachers

HOWARD W. BISHOP MIDDLE SCHOOL PROFILE

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS		
NAME OF GROUP FUNCTIONING AS SAC	School Advisory Council (SAC)	
MEMBERSHIP COMPOSITION OF 1994-95 SAC ACCORDING TO MEMBERSHIP LIST PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL (N = 18)	Administrators:	2
	Teachers:	5
	Support Staff:	2
	Parents:	4
	Business/Community:	4
	Students:	1
SAC MEETINGS	Meeting were held at 6:30 p.m. on the fourth Monday of every other month. The SAC met eight times during the 1994-95 school year.	
SAC MEMBER ATTENDANCE	During the 1994-95 school year, nearly all members attended the meetings on a regular basis. Teachers, administrators, and the student representative attended most meetings. Of the four parents, two attended all meetings and two others attended half of the meetings. One of the three business/community members attended all meetings; the other two attended approximately half of the meetings.	
NEW SAC MEMBERS IN 1995	Compared to the 1994-95 SAC, 11 of 19 1995-96 members had not previously served on the SAC. Turnover was not perceived as affecting the SAC's ability to develop and implement the school's improvement plan. Reasons for SAC members leaving the SAC prior to their terms expiring or not returning the next year included: ■ Students graduated from the school; and ■ The amount of work involved is too much for a voluntary position.	
INVOLVEMENT OF SCHOOL STAFF	Faculty members have the opportunity to volunteer to serve with SAC members and interested citizens on school improvement goal committees. Each teacher serves on at least one committee. Committee members attend workshops to work out implementation of the various Blueprint goals.	

HOWARD W. BISHOP MIDDLE SCHOOL PROFILE

PERCEPTIONS ON SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS	
MOST POSITIVE CONTRIBUTIONS OF BLUEPRINT 2000	Provides long-term process that has placed schools on the same wave length when discussing school improvement;
	Enables stakeholders to adjust their vision while working toward implementing improvements; and
	Enables administrators, school board members, and parents to come together in an environment in which everyone is involved in school improvement initiatives.
NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF BLUEPRINT 2000	Requires too much time and paperwork when coupled with teachers' other professional responsibilities;
	Time required to make sure everything is written in expected terminology, to complete year-end evaluations, and to assure steps are taken to follow Sunshine Law regulations; and
	Has become an overwhelming burden in terms of deadlines and frequent changes in Blueprint 2000 document wording and requirements.
FACTORS THAT HAVE HELPED THE SCHOOL IMPROVE	Provision of uniform school improvement expectations by Blueprint 2000;
	Thorough needs analysis to determine school's priorities;
	Shift in emphasis from spending money for teacher inservice toward providing materials needed to facilitate student performance;
	Provision of additional funding (e.g., Technology Incentive Grant, allocation of Advanced Placement (AP) funds);
	Teachers' willingness to get involved in projects, workshops, and committees;
	Faculty "buy-in" to the Blueprint 2000 process; and
	Blueprint 2000 training.

HOWARD W. BISHOP MIDDLE SCHOOL PROFILE

PERCEPTIONS ON SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS

FACTORS THAT HAVE HINDERED SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT	
	■ Time required to fit the school's existing school improvement efforts into guidelines prescribed by the district to correspond to the Blueprint 2000 framework; ■ Paperwork required by end-of-year reports; ■ Continuous changes in the district's Planning Guide for School Improvement, also referred to as the "Green Book"; ■ Frequent changes in Blueprint 2000 wording and requirements; ■ Costs of implementing school improvement strategies which are viable; ■ Lack of adequate funding to implement school improvement initiatives; and ■ Inadequate teacher planning time to meet the requirements of the Blueprint 2000 process.

HOWARD W. BISHOP MIDDLE SCHOOL PROFILE

1994-95 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	
STATE GOALS INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	All seven state education goals are included in the school's 1994-95 school improvement plan.
OBJECTIVES INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	The 1994-95 school improvement plan included several specific improvement objectives in the following categories: ■ Increase parental involvement; ■ Improve reading, writing, and math skills of students; ■ Reduce the number of disciplinary actions; ■ Improve multicultural awareness, interaction, and cooperativeness; and ■ Improve adult literacy.
STRATEGIES INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	The 1994-95 school improvement plan included numerous school improvement strategies or activities in the following general areas: ■ Agreements/cooperation with other agencies/schools; Parental/community involvement activities; publications/information dissemination; ■ Establish school safety programs; other (nonacademic) program development; implement multicultural activities; ■ Develop and/or conduct surveys; planning, exploring, assessing activities; ■ Teacher/staff training; and ■ Establish, use, or modify student government.

(continued)

HOWARD W. BISHOP MIDDLE SCHOOL PROFILE

1994-95 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	
ADEQUATE PROGRESS AND EVALUATION	The 1994-95 school improvement plan provides a description of adequate progress and includes evaluation procedures. For example, for a school objective related to improving multicultural awareness, the school planned to administer a pre/post test to measure multicultural awareness.
TRENDS IN PLANS	The school's 1993-94 school improvement plan identifies the state's seven Blueprint 2000 goals as school goals. The 1994-95 and 1995-96 school improvement plans address seven and four of the state goals, respectively. The 1995-96 improvement plan addresses readiness to start school; student performance; learning environment; and school safety and environment. Each stated goal receives equal emphasis. However, the objectives of the plans are Blueprint 2000 and district goals and are not school-specific. Additionally, it is difficult to determine the benefit the school will derive from these objectives. The school's 1994-95 and 1995-96 plans include evaluation procedures and definitions of adequate progress.

HOWARD W. BISHOP MIDDLE SCHOOL PROFILE

IMPACT OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES ON SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION	
WAIVERS	None requested.
RESOURCE ALLOCATION	When the school developed its 1993-94 plan it was not certain how it was suppose to utilize Blueprint 2000 funds. It initially concentrated on conducting workshops to help people become more knowledgeable about Blueprint 2000. The school has shifted its focus from allocating resources for workshops to providing materials needed to help improve student performance.
FUNDS	Additional funds were provided through a three-year Technology Incentive Grant from the Department of Education. For the 1995-96 school year, the district also allocated Advanced Placement (AP) funds to schools that have identified how the money will be used to help bring about improved student performance. Howard Bishop received approximately $6,500 in additional resources through the program.
DECISION-MAKING	The principal solicits the input of SAC members in making decisions involving the allocation of school resources. She also relies on recommendations of faculty members via the Steering Committee which is composed of Department Chairs and Team Leaders when making decisions affecting school management.

HOWARD W. BISHOP MIDDLE SCHOOL PROFILE

EXAMPLES OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES

School Improvement Cited	Samples of Initiatives	Description and Impact of Initiatives	Relationship to BP 2000 Goals
Increased Readiness to Start Middle School	BLAZE Program (Bishop Leaders Attaining Zeal in Education)	The BLAZE program, an orientation camp for incoming 6th grade students, is designed to help these students make a smooth transition from elementary to middle school. The focus for the four-day camp is: (1) to become acquainted with other students, teachers, and staff; (2) to become familiar with the campus and routine at Bishop; (3) to build self-esteem; (4) to teach stress management; (5) to develop communication skills; (6) to develop decision-making skills; and (7) to develop cooperation skills. Participation in the camp has grown significantly from 50 students in 1991 to over 300 students in 1995. Teachers have observed changes in student attitudes at the beginning of the 1995-96 school year, compared to past years; students appear to be more enthusiastic and less fearful in the new school environment. The school is in the process of developing monitoring and evaluation procedures for the program.	Goals 1, 3, 4 (continued)

School Improvement Cited	Samples of Initiatives	Description and Impact of Initiatives	Relationship to BP 2000 Goals
Improved Discipline	Revised Discipline Plan	The revised plan was initially implemented in 1993 and is designed to provide a better learning environment through setting parameters and handling discipline problems in a consistent, proactive manner. The plan is based on the premise that discipline can have positive outcomes through problem solving. Students are informed of the school's expectations for behavior, rather than rules, and the specific consequences associated with not meeting these expectations. The plan establishes four levels of referrals designed to correct misconduct without removing students from the school setting. In addition, parents are kept informed of the status of referred students. School discipline referral records were provided as evidence of the impact of the program. The total number of referrals in 1992-93, when the program was first initiated, was 2,986. The number of referrals dropped considerably in 1993-94 to 2,617. Although the numbers rose during the 1994-95 school year to 2,903, there were 83 fewer referrals during the 1994-95 school year than in 1992-93 when the program began. In addition to numbers of referrals, teachers indicated that they have observed that student behavior has greatly improved over the past three years.	Goals 3, 4, 5
Increased Communication With Parents	Home Phone System	Each teacher has a voice mailbox number to provide information to parents about what is happening in the classroom and at the school. The district provides a monthly computer printout to the school indicating the number of calls received and which teachers received the calls. This information was provided as evidence of the impact of the phone system. In September 1995, over 1,700 Home Phone calls had been logged for Howard Bishop School.	Goals 1, 3, 4 (continued)

School Improvement Cited	Samples of Initiatives	Description and Impact of Initiatives	Relationship to BP 2000 Goals
Increased Multi-cultural Awareness	Heritage Fair	The annual Heritage Fair activities begin in the classroom. Students are involved in projects that enable them to share ideas about their cultural heritage. At the Fair, parents, teachers, and students have an opportunity to view childrens' work and find out about other cultures (e.g., sample food from other countries, listen to students speaking other languages). Over 1,600 individuals attended the 1994 Fair. Teachers have observed that students involved in the project are more receptive to students who speak other languages.	Goals 3, 4

EASTSIDE HIGH SCHOOL PROFILE

SCHOOL DESCRIPTION	
SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS, AS IDENTIFIED BY STAKEHOLDERS	Stakeholders identified characteristics they believed should be considered when examining the improvement initiatives at the school. These characteristics include: ■ The school provides standard high school curriculum to its zoned students. It is also the site of the district's International Baccalaureate Magnet Program; ■ Students attending the school are from families with a wide range of ethnic backgrounds. Administrators estimated that students at the school come from families of approximately 60 nations; ■ The school attendance zone includes one of the poorest sections of Alachua County; and ■ Eastside High School serves a very large special needs population which includes physically impaired students.
NUMBER OF STUDENTS AND TEACHERS IN 1995	■ 1,471 students ■ 102 teachers

EASTSIDE HIGH SCHOOL PROFILE

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS		
NAME OF GROUP FUNCTIONING AS SAC	School Advisory Council (SAC)	
MEMBERSHIP COMPOSITION OF 1994-95 SAC ACCORDING TO MEMBERSHIP LIST PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL (N = 13)	Administrators:	1
	Teachers:	3
	Support Staff:	1
	Parents:	3
	Business/Community:	3
	Students:	2
SAC MEETINGS	SAC meetings were held on Tuesday nights at 7:30-8:30 p.m. The SAC met 15 times during the 1994-95 school year.	
SAC MEMBER ATTENDANCE	Attendance records were maintained for 11 of the 13 SAC meetings in 1994-95. According to meeting minutes, teachers, students, and parents generally attended meetings. There is no record of administrative representation at the SAC meetings and support staff attended only 1 of 11 meetings for which there are attendance rosters. Of the three parent members, two attended nearly all meetings and the third attended about half the meetings. Of the three business/community members, 1 attended 7 of the 11 meetings, while the remaining 2 failed to attend any meetings. Reasons cited for business/community members not attending meetings included that they were too busy or they lived out of town and commuted between cities.	
	(continued)	

EASTSIDE HIGH SCHOOL PROFILE

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS	
NEW SAC MEMBERS IN 1995	Compared to the 1994-95 SAC, 8 of 14 1995-96 SAC members had not previously served on the advisory council of the school. However, turnover was not perceived as affecting the SAC's ability to develop and implement the school's improvement plan. Students graduating from high school, time requirements, and personal issues were given as reasons that SAC members leave the SAC prior to their terms expiring or do not return the next year. Concerns were raised over a new school board policy that some people believed may cause future turnover by restricting the membership of SAC members to two years.
INVOLVEMENT OF SCHOOL STAFF	All teachers are surveyed as part of the needs assessment process. In addition, approximately 20% of the staff sit on committees that deal with issues such as discipline and attendance. These committees provide input to the SAC either through summaries and recommendations or through committee members who also serve on the SAC. Prior to the public hearing of the school improvement plan, teachers review and comment on a summary of the plan.

EASTSIDE HIGH SCHOOL PROFILE

PERCEPTIONS ON SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS	
MOST POSITIVE CONTRIBUTIONS OF BLUEPRINT 2000	■ Gives teachers and students a voice in school decision-making that in the past they did not have;
	■ Provides a framework, goals, and objectives for devising school improvement plans;
	■ Acts as a catalyst to reflect on how the school will make needed improvements;
	■ Empowers schools and enables them to "fight" for what they want (i.e., school board members are less likely to say "no"); and
	■ Provides assistance in making daily decisions affecting the school.
NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF BLUEPRINT 2000	■ The goals in Blueprint 2000 are too vague, and the specific outcomes desired by the state are not stated. As a result, this leads schools to guess what the state really wants; and
	■ The time, paperwork, and meetings either take away from other responsibilities, such as grading papers, or make demands on personal time without compensation.
FACTORS THAT HAVE HELPED THE SCHOOL IMPROVE	■ Teachers work together for a common goal and challenge themselves on what they can and cannot do;
	■ Increased flexibility provided through waivers granted by the school board concerning the attendance policy; and
	■ The school environment encourages input from the teachers.
FACTORS THAT HAVE HINDERED SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT	■ Lack of staff and funding; and
	■ Lack of time to think about next year or long-term goals because teachers are too busy trying to keep up with day-to-day activities.

EASTSIDE HIGH SCHOOL PROFILE

1994-95 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	
STATE GOALS INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	The school included all state education goals in their 1994-95 school improvement plan.
CATEGORIES OF OBJECTIVES INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	The 1994-95 school improvement plan included several specific improvement objectives in the following categories: ■ Improve study skills; ■ Increase the graduation rate; ■ Increase scores on standardized tests; ■ Reduce the number of disciplinary actions; ■ Increase training or inservice for teachers/staff; and ■ Improve adult literacy.
CATEGORIES OF STRATEGIES INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	The 1994-95 school improvement plan included numerous school improvement strategies or activities in the following general areas: ■ Tutorial activities; ■ Publications/information dissemination; provide training and/or materials to parents; ■ Teacher/staff training; ■ Changes in daily/yearly calendar/school schedule; team projects/teaming of students/cooperative learning; ■ In-school suspension/Saturday suspension; other nonacademic program development; ■ Pilot projects; and ■ Establish committees, study groups, planning groups; planning, exploring, assessing activities.
ADEQUATE PROGRESS AND EVALUATION	The 1994-95 school improvement plan provides a description of adequate progress and evaluation procedures.

(continued)

EASTSIDE HIGH SCHOOL PROFILE

1994-95 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	
TRENDS IN PLANS	The school's 1993-94 school improvement plan identifies the state's seven Blueprint 2000 goals as school goals. The objectives of the 1994-95 and 1995-96 plans are Blueprint 2000 and district goals; they are not school-specific. The 1994-95 and 1995-96 school improvement plans address seven and five of the state goals, respectively. It is difficult to determine the benefit the school will derive from these objectives. However, the school's 1994-95 and 1995-96 plans include evaluation procedures and definitions of adequate progress.

EASTSIDE HIGH SCHOOL PROFILE

IMPACT OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES ON SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION	
WAIVERS	The school board granted a waiver to allow the school to establish a stricter attendance policy for students.
RESOURCE ALLOCATION	The school board or school administrators do not allocate resources differently under Blueprint 2000 than in the past. However, the school now receives $8 per student for school improvements which it did not receive prior to Blueprint 2000.
FUNDS	In addition to lottery enhancement funds of $11,736, Eastside High School receives funds for students who score a 3 or higher on advanced placement tests. In the past, the school received only 30% of this money, and now it receives 70%. The 1995-96 allocation amounted to $109,974. These funds are unrestricted. Some people we spoke to indicated that this additional money helped the school to make needed improvements. The school also receives a "high performance incentive" based on its graduation rate. For the 1995-96 school year, the school received approximately $11,000. This money was placed in the school's school improvement fund and can be used without restriction by the school upon approval of the SAC.
DECISION-MAKING	Under Blueprint 2000, administrators indicated that they place more emphasis on obtaining staff and SAC input when making decisions. For example, the SAC has had input on hiring decisions.

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EASTSIDE HIGH SCHOOL PROFILE

EXAMPLES OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES

School Improvement Cited	Examples of Initiatives	Description and Impact of Initiatives	Relationship to BP 2000 Goals
Improved Graduation Rate	Team Teaching Program	The school has developed a team teaching approach to identify and assist students who either did not pass the High School Competency Test (HSCT) in their first attempt or are more likely not to complete high school. The teachers who comprise a team all have the same group of students and have common planning periods to enable them to discuss student needs, student placement, and develop coordinated teaching strategies. Student teacher ratios are kept to approximately 15:1 so that teachers are able to work more closely with individual students to diagnose problems and assist students in learning. While the overall intent of the program is to improve the graduation rate of students participating, teachers also work to improve self-esteem, attendance, discipline, and social adjustment skills of students. While the team teaching concept has been used at Eastside for several years, using team teaching for drop-out prevention has been at the school for only two years. Thus, teachers we spoke with indicated that it is too early to measure program results in terms of graduation rate or student performance. However, teachers did indicate they are beginning to observe changes in student self-esteem, discipline, and social adjustment skills. In Fall 1995, students who had not passed the communications portion of the HSCT in 1994 retook the test. Ten of the 13 students retaking the test passed. Administrators believed that this indicates the team approach has had a positive impact on student performance. The school is working on developing a long-term method to evaluate its program.	Goal 2 (continued)

School Improvement Cited	Examples of Initiatives	Description and Impact of Initiatives	Relationship to BP 2000 Goals
Multicultural Awareness and Improved Discipline	Multicultural Program	The school is involved in several activities to bridge the differences between its two distinct populations of students: those participating in the International Baccalaureate (IB) Program and other students at the school. The school has purchased and hung flags outside the administration office representing over 60 national origins of students, and students participate in numerous activities during a "multicultural week" at the school. These activities are designed to celebrate the diversity at the school and include sessions on student values, racial issues, and other countries and cultures. Administrators, teachers, and school advisory council members indicated that students and teachers feel more connected to the school and students have a greater awareness of the world as a result of the multicultural activities. The fact that there is great interest from faculty and students to continue the program was provided as evidence of the impact of the program. In addition, the school principal provided data that showed the incidents of fighting and disorderly conduct of 9th graders decreased from 29 in September 1994 to 12 in April 1995. The principal attributed these changes, in part, to multicultural activities at the school.	Goal 5 (continued)

School Improvement Cited	Examples of Initiatives	Description and Impact of Initiatives	Relationship to BP 2000 Goals
Reduction in Number of Absences	Revised Attendance Policy	The school had a significant problem with unexcused absences and forged excuses. Thus, during the 1994-95 school year the SAC developed an attendance policy designed to decrease the number of student absences from school by placing more responsibility on parents and students. The policy allows up to a total of nine excused/unexcused student absences from class per semester, excluding absences due to school field trips. If a student is absent more than nine times during a semester, he or she loses class credit. A committee of three students, three faculty members, and three parents reviews appeals to the policy. The school began enforcing the policy during the 1995-96 school year. As a result, it may be too early to measure the full impact of the new policy. However, SAC members we spoke to including teachers, community members, and parents, indicated that teachers are observing fewer incidents of students "skipping" school, thus improving the overall ability of these students to learn. In addition, administrators indicated that it has streamlined the attendance process since excuses are no longer required or collected.	Goals 2, 3

Monroe County School District

In October 1995, we reviewed the impact of Blueprint 2000 in Monroe County School District. Located at the southern tip of Florida, Monroe County has a population of approximately 82,250 and is the 34th largest county in Florida. Monroe County residents have a diverse ethnic and racial background. Approximately 92% of residents are white, 5% are African American, and 3% are of other racial backgrounds. Approximately 12% of all Monroe County residents are Hispanic. Half of the households in Monroe County have an annual income of $29,351 or less, compared to $27,483 for the state. In addition, 11% of the population in Monroe County lives below the poverty level; Monroe County has the 18th lowest poverty rate in the state.

Geography is more a defining characteristic of this school district than any other district we visited. Stakeholders consider this a major factor in identifying external characteristics that impact the schools. Monroe County is comprised of several islands, or Keys, each having unique social and economic characteristics. Because of the physical distances involved, Monroe County has more schools than the population would seem to justify. For example, the three high schools–Coral Shores, Key West High, and Marathon High–had a total student population of 2,063 in Fall 1994. Although the combined student population is less than that of some individual high schools in many districts, Monroe County needs three high schools because of the distances between schools.

Monroe County's major industry is tourism. Stakeholders consider this a factor in the high mobility rate at some schools. Many of the jobs related to tourism are relatively low-wage, service jobs. This, combined with a high cost-of-living in many parts of Monroe County, leads to a high employee turnover rate and high student mobility. Schools with lower mobility rates are typically located in areas that have many long-time residents.

Implementation and Impact of Blueprint 2000 in Monroe County School District

The three schools we visited in Monroe County School District are involved in several activities they believe will result in needed improvements at their schools. The 1994-95 school improvement plans at the three schools are comprehensive and include all seven state education goals and numerous objectives aimed at improving several different areas. Stakeholders believe that schools are implementing many school improvement initiatives relevant to Blueprint 2000 goals and objectives. At the three schools we visited, stakeholders frequently identified improvements in students' computer competency; reductions in tardiness, truancy, and disciplinary actions; increased attendance; and improved school readiness. Stakeholders presented some data reflecting increased attendance and fewer disciplinary referrals. Teacher observation is the primary data source for most improvements. Some improvement projects are in the process of being implemented and it may be too early to measure their full impact. However, in some cases, systematic data collection methods are being developed to evaluate the improvements. Two of the three schools we visited do not define adequate progress in their school improvement plans. Horace O'Bryant Middle School does not define adequate progress in its 1993-94 plan; however, the school does define adequate progress in its 1994-95 and 1995-96 plans.

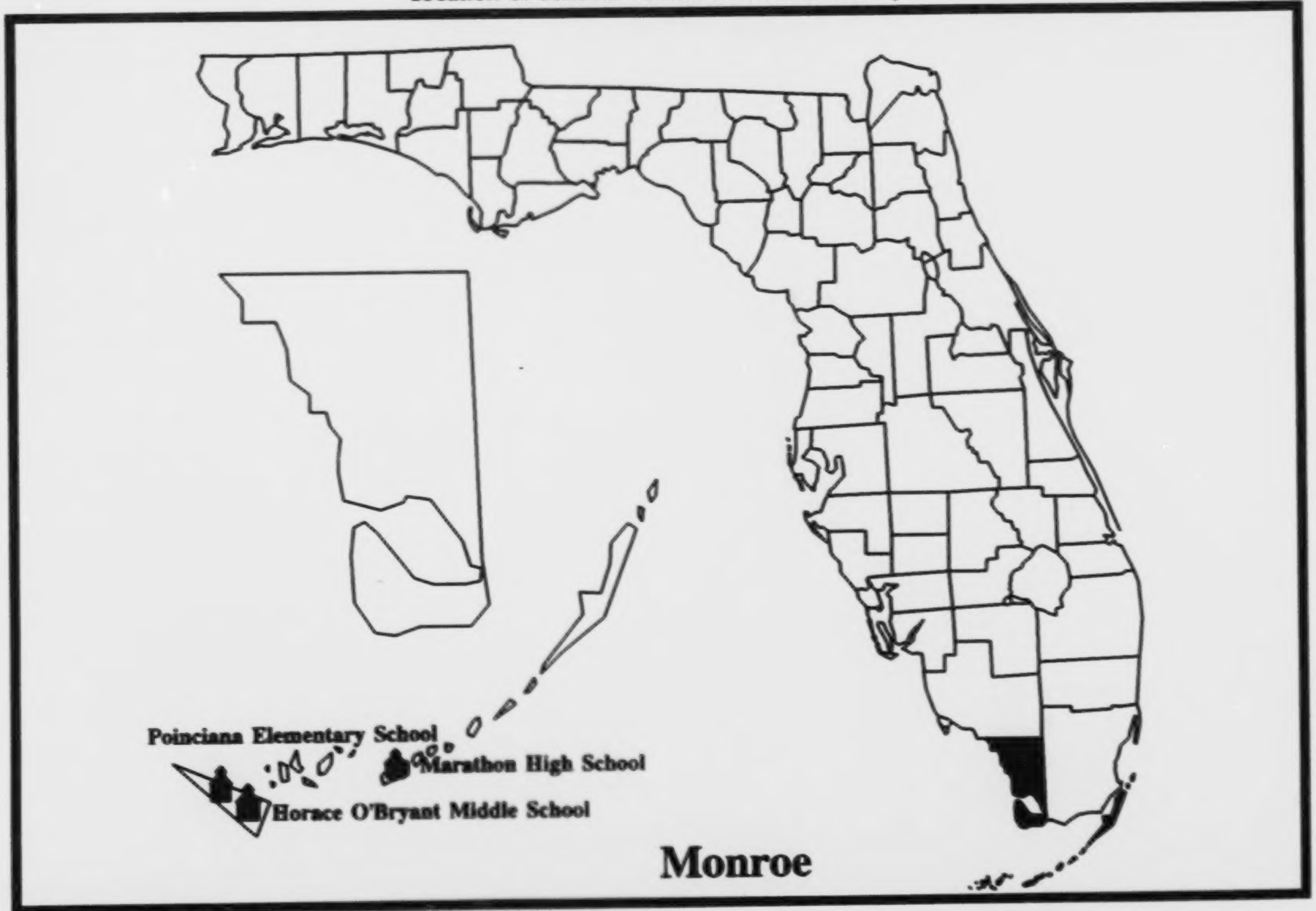
In Monroe County, leadership and commitment appear to be strong, particularly among district administrators, to ensure that school improvement efforts are successful. The school board provides a number of guidelines concerning school improvement plans. For instance, the guidelines require that each school's improvement plan addresses all seven Blueprint 2000 goals. In addition, district staff establish expectations for school improvement plans. For example, in 1995-96, the district is requiring that school improvement plans include more specific outcomes that are tied more closely to quantitative student performance indicators. In addition, district staff provide feedback that challenge schools to set improvement objectives high. District administrators are developing the means to collect baseline data to evaluate the short- and intermediate-term success of many school improvement projects.

District and School Demographics

Monroe County School District is the 37th largest school district in the state and has 9,380 prekindergarten through 12th grade students and 13 schools. Based on the latest information available from the Department of Education, approximately 74% of students are white, 10% are African American, and 15% are Hispanic, compared to state averages of 59%, 25%, and 15%, respectively. One indicator often used to measure the poverty rate of a school district is the percentage of students eligible to receive free or reduced lunches. In 1994, the average percentage of students eligible to receive free or reduced lunches in Monroe County was 35% compared to 43% statewide. In 1994, the mobility rates in Monroe County (i.e., percentage of students who transferred into or out of the school during the school year) were 41% for elementary schools, 45% for middle schools, and 38% for high schools. The 1994 state median mobility rates were 36% for elementary schools, 31% for middle schools, and 33% for high schools. In addition, 544 kindergarten through 12th grade students attended non-public schools in Monroe County in 1994-95.

We visited three public schools in Monroe County: one elementary school, one middle school, and one high school. The largest school we visited is Horace O'Bryant Middle School with 903 students and the smallest school is Poinciana Elementary School with 627 students. We also visited Marathon High School with 640 students. See Exhibit 6 for demographic information on the students attending each school we visited. See Exhibit 7 for student performance data for each school.

Exhibit 5
Location of Schools Visited in Monroe County


Poinciana Elementary School
Marathon High School
Horace O'Bryant Middle School
Monroe

Source: Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability.

Exhibit 6

	1995 Student Information						
School	Number of Students	Percent Eligible to Receive Free/Reduced Lunch	White	African American	Hispanic	Other	Mobility Rate of Students
Poinciana Elementary	627	26%	81%	5%	12%	1%	27%
Horace O'Bryant Middle	903	32%	61%	16%	22%	1%	32%
Marathon High School	640	31%	70%	8%	21%	1%	46%

Note: Information for free/reduced lunches and mobility rates is based on 1994-95 school year data.

Source: Based on information provided by the Department of Education and individual schools.

Exhibit 7

	Student Performance Data					
School	94 NRT Reading or HSCT Communication Scores	95 NRT Reading or HSCT Communication Scores	94 NRT or HSCT Mathematics Scores	95 NRT or HSCT Mathematics Scores	94 Florida Writing Scores	95 Florida Writing Scores
Poinciana Elementary	67%	64%	76%	68%	38%	40%
Horace O'Bryant Middle	51%	52%	62%	55%	42%	64%
Marathon High	80%	80%	62%	69%	52%	77%

Note: For reading and mathematics in elementary and middle schools, data reflects percentage of students' scores above the 50th national percentile on Reading Comprehension and Mathematics Concepts/Applications subtests on national referenced tests (NRT). Data for high schools consists of passing scores on the Communications and Mathematics sections of the High School Competency Tests (HSCT) for first time test takers during the fall administration. Writing scores reflect the percentage of students scoring "3" and above on a scale of 0 to 6 on the Florida Writes assessment. This table includes student performance data for elementary, middle, and high schools visited

Source: Based on information provided by the Department of Education.

School Board and District Administration

School board members and district administrators in Monroe County School District play an active role in the school improvement process. Most board members visit each district school during the course of the year. In addition, each school has the opportunity to present its school improvement plan to the entire school board. During a special four-day workshop, school board members query each school about its needs assessment, current objectives, and the status of previous objectives. The Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction is the district coordinator of school improvement efforts. The Assistant Superintendent heads a monitoring team of district staff who work with schools on developing plans and provide implementation oversight.

The school board provides a number of guidelines concerning school improvement plans. These guidelines require that school improvement plans address all seven Blueprint 2000 goals. In addition, for each Blueprint 2000 goal, the district identifies areas of emphasis for elementary, middle, and high schools. Each school is expected to review these goal areas and develop objectives to improve these areas as needed. For example, each school receives test scores in reading, mathematics, and writing that are for the two prior years. If one or more test score is in the critically low category, the school is expected to address this deficiency in its plan. To collect baseline data, the district developed a school profile for each school to complete yearly starting in 1995-96. The profiles will provide schools with data for comparison, as well as the indicators on measures associated with several Blueprint 2000 goals.

School Improvement Process

School Advisory Councils. The 1994-95 school advisory councils in the three schools we visited range in size from 19 to 40 members. Meetings are typically held in the evening, once a month. All councils include members that represent teachers, parents, and the community. Parents are the majority in each of the SACs. The school board is concerned that SACs are appropriately balanced racially, ethnically, and in respect to the category of stakeholders (district administrators, school board members, principals, teachers, and SAC members). The school board previously sent SAC membership lists back to principals to adjust SAC membership and obtain more balanced representation. Two of the three schools do not maintain SAC attendance records. However, in the one school that maintains attendance records, about 50% of the parents attended at least four of the eight SAC meetings. Turnover of SAC members is not perceived to be a major problem at any of the schools. Typically, parent SAC members leave because they move or their children graduate from the school.

Perceptions on the School Improvement Process. Stakeholders believe Blueprint 2000 provides a focus for school improvement initiatives by establishing a framework for the planning process and holding schools accountable for addressing specific student performance goals. Staff at one school believe Blueprint 2000 helps to heighten stakeholders' awareness, particularly parents, of the complexities of the educational process. Staff members also perceive that the emphasis on school improvement results in a stronger commitment to staff development. Stakeholders indicate that the additional time required to complete school improvement activities is the primary negative impact associated with Blueprint 2000. These activities include attending meetings during and after school; conducting needs assessments; collecting data; and developing school improvement plans. Staff at one school report that too much data is required to evaluate the school's progress and the implementation of improvements.

Stakeholders identified several factors that they believe help their schools make improvements. Stakeholders generally perceive that site-based management, which was initiated in the district prior to the implementation of Blueprint 2000, provided a strong foundation for their improvement efforts and provided flexibility in identifying and solving problems. Teachers perceive that they are part of the management team because they often provide input on many aspects of school operations. Stakeholders' involvement, especially teachers and SAC members, results in their belief that they are an important part of the school improvement process.

Stakeholders also identified several factors that hinder schools' improvement efforts. Staff at one school believe the number of goals to be addressed and the lack of understanding of Blueprint 2000 requirements hamper improvement efforts. Some teachers feel district efforts to require that objectives become more data driven and reflect greater risk-taking could be counterproductive (i.e., fear that the school will not reach quantitative indicators might inhibit risk-taking.) Other factors stakeholders cite include difficulty in matching existing school objectives to Blueprint 2000 categories, problems in reaching consensus on school improvement issues, and inadequate physical and financial resources to fully implement improvement projects.

School Improvement Plans

Goals, Objectives, Strategies. The 1994-95 school improvement plans for the three schools we visited are comprehensive and include all seven state education goals and objectives aimed at improving several different areas. The most common improvement areas are increased scores on standardized tests and increased computer competency of students. Finally, school improvement plans describe numerous strategies to achieve schools' improvement objectives. For example, Marathon High School's plan includes 94 different improvement strategies. The most common improvement strategies across the three schools are the following:

- Teacher/staff training;
- Planning, exploring, and assessing activities; needs identification/assessment;
- Continuation of existing programs;
- Implementation of specific academic projects; new or modified curriculum;
- Parent-teacher conferences; publications/information dissemination; and
- Increased use of computers in curriculum.

The school profiles that follow the district overview section provide additional information about school improvement plans at the four schools we visited in Monroe County.

Trends in Plans Over Time. We reviewed the 1993-94, 1994-95, and 1995-96 school improvement plans of the three schools we visited. Poinciana Elementary School's and Marathon High School's plans do not define adequate progress. Horace

O'Bryant Middle School does not define adequate progress in its 1993-94 plans; however, the school's 1994-95 and 1995-96 plans include definitions of adequate progress. [2] Over the three-year period, the three schools continued to include all seven state goals in their school improvement plans. To develop longer range plans, schools are making use of multi-year objectives with annual revisions of strategies as needed, based on year-end evaluations.

Impact of School Improvement

Students. Stakeholders believe that schools are implementing many school improvement initiatives relevant to Blueprint 2000 goals and objectives. At the three schools we visited, the most frequently cited improvements include increased computer competency of students; reduced number of tardiness, truancy, and disciplinary actions; increased attendance; and improved school readiness. While some data was presented reflecting increased attendance and reduced disciplinary referrals, teacher observation is the primary data source for most improvements. The district initiated new guidelines requiring that school improvement plans include more specific outcomes that are tied more closely to quantitative student performance indicators. The district is also emphasizing to each school the importance of not setting goals too low. The school board and district administrators established an expectation for school goals that reflect significant improvements.

Teachers. Through its long-established site-based management structure, Monroe County School District has a history of teacher involvement in the decision-making process. Each school's planning team consists of teachers and other staff members who work closely with the SAC to ensure that stakeholders' concerns relating to improvement issues are taken into consideration. The school-level planning team also works closely with the SAC to develop the school improvement plan. SAC members, including teachers, are assigned to specific Blueprint 2000 goal areas and are responsible for developing goals and assisting to measure and evaluate the school's progress. Teachers at the three schools do not generally perceive that the time and effort spent planning and implementing improvement activities takes too much time away from teaching. They do not perceive the initiatives as an additional burden because of their existing involvement in site-based management and planning.

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[2] Schools in Monroe County report adequate progress in the final report submitted to the district at the conclusion of the school year. Definitions of adequate progress will be included in future plans.

School Administration. Stakeholders generally perceive that neither district nor school administrators are making decisions very differently under Blueprint 2000. Prior to Blueprint 2000, teachers and other stakeholders were included in the management process and had flexibility in decision making (e.g., resource allocations due to district-wide site-based management). Staff at one school believe that although stakeholders are routinely included in the decision-making process, the procedure is now formalized by parental involvement through the school advisory council. As part of its efforts to facilitate improvements in student performance, Marathon High School requested and received a waiver permitting block scheduling. Block scheduling allows the completion of course performance standards in reduced class hours, thereby providing students the opportunity for additional academic or vocational courses.

Highlights of School Improvement Initiatives. The three schools we visited are implementing numerous improvement projects. This section provides brief highlights of a few of these improvements:

- **Blueprint 2000 Goal 1, School Readiness: Increased Readiness to Start Elementary School**. Poinciana Elementary School staff visit the area pre-kindergarten programs to provide information and encourage early planning for elementary school. Parents of pre-schoolers are urged to register their children in the Spring for the following Fall semester, after making sure shot records are up-to-date and readiness testing has been done. Evaluation of the strategies is based on the percent increase in children being registered early. This data is not yet available.

- **Blueprint 2000 Goal 2, Graduation Rate and Readiness for Postsecondary School: Increased Career Readiness**. The objective of Horace O'Bryant's (HOB) career readiness program is to insure that every student has taken some definite steps in career exploration by the end of the 8th grade, as evidenced by completion of a career planner. The Career Resource Center in the HOB library contains a computerized career guidance program and career videos, in addition to printed materials. On the last Career Day (January 19, 1995), there were 30 career booths and 45 volunteer community members providing career information. All of the grades have had guests speak about their careers. Personnel from the U.S.S. Key West have provided career information and have adopted HOB as their community service project. Business education is now available as an option to 8th graders through the exploratory wheel series of courses. About 85 students enrolled in 1995. In addition, 372 students rotated through the Technology Lab during the 1994-95 school year. Evaluation of these career preparation strategies are not yet available. However, the number of students participating suggests that students perceive this information as valuable.

- **Blueprint 2000, Goal 3, Student Performance: Increased High School Competency Test (HSCT) Scores.** Recognition that improvement in HSCT scores, particularly in math and communications, would require curriculum changes and teacher support was an important first step in focusing Marathon High School's efforts. Teachers re-examine curriculum to ensure that adequate coverage is provided for the core material contained in the HSCT. Teachers are encouraged to develop higher expectations for the students while cooperating in developing pre-test practice strategies. Programs to prepare students for the HSCT include a breakfast on test day, motivational speakers on the importance of good test performance, and an appeal to parents and community to minimize external influence that might negatively impact test performance. Evaluation of these strategies will be made based on the performance of junior students at the end of the 1995-96 school year.

School Profiles

The following school profiles contain specific information about the implementation and impact of Blueprint 2000 at each of the schools we visited in Monroe County School District. Each school profile provides information on school advisory councils, school improvements cited by stakeholder groups, school improvement plans, and stakeholder perceptions on Blueprint 2000.

Monroe County School District

School Profiles

Poinciana Elementary School

Horace O'Bryant Middle School

Marathon High School

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POINCIANA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROFILE

SCHOOL DESCRIPTION	
SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS, AS IDENTIFIED BY STAKEHOLDERS	Stakeholders identified certain school characteristics that should be considered in examining improvement initiatives at the school. These characteristics include: ■ The school is an older, well-established institution with a great deal of stability. Some of the parents of current students attended Poinciana as children; ■ The majority of the student body is from middle-class or wealthy families. Parental involvement among this group is high; and ■ The student body also includes a group of African-American students who are bused in from Bahama Village. The school has had difficulty getting the parents of these children involved in school activities.
NUMBER OF STUDENTS AND TEACHERS IN 1995	■ 627 students ■ 27 teachers

POINCIANA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROFILE

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS	
NAME OF GROUP FUNCTIONING AS SAC	School Advisory Council
MEMBERSHIP COMPOSITION OF 1994-95 SAC ACCORDING TO MEMBERSHIP LIST PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL (N = 19)	Administrators: 2 Teachers: 2 Support Staff: 2 Parents: 11 Business/Community: 2
SAC MEETINGS	The SAC met on the 1st Monday evening of each month, for a total of nine times during the 1994-95 school year.
SAC MEMBER ATTENDANCE	Attendance records were not kept in 1994-95, but according to the principal will be kept for 1995-96.
NEW SAC MEMBERS IN 1995	Compared to the 1994-95 SAC, 1 of 17 members of the 1995-96 SAC had not previously served on the SAC. Turnover of SAC members was not perceived as a problem by either the SAC chair or the principal.
INVOLVEMENT OF SCHOOL STAFF	As a site-based management school, the school has a building-level planning team that provides input. The planning team consists of five members, each serving for two years. Three of these members represent grade levels and were elected by their cohorts. The fourth member represents special areas, and the fifth member is an at-large member appointed by the principal. The planning team worked with the SAC to develop the school improvement plan. The SAC was the executive board of the school's PTA.

Poinciana Elementary School Profile

Perceptions on School Improvement Process	
Most Positive Contributions of Blueprint 2000	■ Blueprint 2000 provoked a greater sense of awareness about school improvement and helped the school focus on specific areas; ■ Blueprint 2000 made parents more aware of the "nuts and bolts" of how the school operates and the problems facing the school; and ■ Blueprint 2000 also confirmed for the school that school improvement ideas already under way are "good."
Negative Impacts of Blueprint 2000	■ The only negative impact has been the amount of time required for meetings. There are a lot of meetings, both during and after school.
Factors that Have Helped the School Improve	■ The fact that the school was already a site-based management school was a major factor in helping the school improve; ■ A generally high level of communication between parents and teachers was already in place; and ■ The teachers already had experience in working together, expressing their views, and providing input to the administration.
Factors that Have Hindered School Improvement	■ The number of Blueprint 2000 goals that had to be addressed and the lack of understanding about what was required was at times a hindrance. The instructions for Blueprint 2000 were too vague; ■ The difficulty of reaching consensus among all stakeholders on school improvement issues was sometimes a hindrance; and ■ The efforts of the district to require that objectives become more data driven and reflect greater risk-taking concerned some teachers.

POINCIANA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROFILE

PERCEPTIONS ON SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS

FACTORS THAT HAVE HINDERED SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

- The number of Blueprint 2000 goals that had to be addressed and the lack of understanding about what was required was at times a hindrance. The instructions for Blueprint 2000 were too vague;
- The difficulty of reaching consensus among all stakeholders on school improvement issues was sometimes a hindrance; and
- The efforts of the district to require that objectives become more data driven and reflect greater risk-taking concerned some teachers.

POINCIANA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROFILE

1994-95 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	
STATE GOALS INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	All seven state education goals were included in the 1994-95 school improvement plan.
OBJECTIVES INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	The 1994-95 school improvement plan included 12 specific improvement objectives in the following categories: ■ Increase scores on standardized tests; ■ Increase computer competency of students; ■ Improve reading, writing, and math skills; ■ Improve career preparedness; ■ Provide alternatives to anti-social behavior; ■ Reduce incidence of violence, substance abuse, vandalism, etc.; ■ Increase daily attendance; ■ Improve academic skills of at-risk students and special-needs students; ■ Improve the transition of students/orientation ; and ■ Increase training or inservice for teachers/staff.
	(continued)

POINCIANA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROFILE

1994-95 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	
STRATEGIES INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	The 1994-95 school improvement plan included 49 school improvement strategies or activities in the following general areas: ■ Implement specific academic projects; new or modified curriculum; ■ Agreement/cooperation with other agencies; parent-teacher conferences; publications/information dissemination; ■ Alternative education programs; ■ Increased use of computers in curriculum; purchase/use applied software; ■ Testing of students for placement/placement of students; ■ Teacher/staff training; fund raising/seeking activities; ■ Reduce teacher workload; ■ Planning, exploring, and assessing options; needs identification/ assessment activities; ■ Develop incentives and/or academic recognition activities; counseling/advising; peer counseling/peer groups; and ■ Other (non academic) program development.
ADEQUATE PROGRESS AND EVALUATION	The 1994-95 school improvement plan includes evaluation procedures, but does not include a definition of adequate progress.
TRENDS IN PLANS	Like its 1993-94 and 1994-95 school improvement plans, Poinciana Elementary School's 1995-96 plan does not contain a description of adequate progress. Additionally, the school continued to include all seven state education goals in its plan. Finally, the 1995-96 plan includes many of the same improvement objectives and strategies that were included in the two previous plans.

POINCIANA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROFILE

IMPACT OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES ON SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION	
WAIVERS	The school did not request any waivers.
RESOURCE ALLOCATION	The allocation of resources, both from the district to the school and within the school, has not changed dramatically because site-based management already provided flexibility in allocating resources.
FUNDS	The PTA has been very supportive of the school. In 1994-95, the PTA provided a total of $45,000. In the 1995-96 school year, the PTA provided $36,000. These PTA funds were used for a variety of purposes: covered walk-way for the students; a new playground; wiring the school for cable and networking; and providing multimedia computers in every classroom. The school received money from the DOE Technology Incentive Fund. In each of the last two years, the school received $35,000. The school anticipates it will receive an additional $28,000 this year from the Technology Incentive Fund. The school has used these funds for technology training, hardware and software. The school also received several other grants in 1995 including a Collaborative Training Initiative Grant ($8,432), Reading is Fundamental (RIF) Grant ($2,720), and Title VI Media Enhancement Funds ($3,254).
DECISION-MAKING	Blueprint 2000 has not changed the decision-making process at the school level significantly because of site-based management in place prior to Blueprint 2000.

POINCIANA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROFILE

IMPACT OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES ON STUDENTS

School Improvement Cited	Examples of Initiatives	Description and Impact of Initiatives	Relationship to BP 2000 Goals
Reduction in Disciplinary Referrals	Various Strategies Including: ■ Conflict Resolution Program.	The purpose of the conflict resolution program is to teach students the skills of resolving conflicts through talking rather than physical means. Fourth graders were taken off-campus and given training in methods of conflict resolution. No firm data is available yet to demonstrate the impact of the program. However, the principal believed that there had been a reduction in disciplinary referrals.	Goal 4
Increase in School Readiness	Various Strategies Including: ■ Visitation of Pre-K programs; ■ Early completion of testing and shots; and ■ Early registration program.	Poinciana staff visit the area pre-kindergarten programs to provide information and encourage early planning. Parents of pre-schoolers are urged to register their children in the Spring for the following Fall semester, after making sure shot records are up-to-date and readiness testing has been done. To evaluate their accomplishment, the percentage of incoming kindergarten students who register early will be screened to provide identification of services and appropriate placement. The school reported that 100% of children were screened in 1994-95.	Goal 1 (continued)

School Improvement Cited	Examples of Initiatives	Description and Impact of Initiatives	Relationship to BP 2000 Goals
Reduction in Student Tardiness	Various Strategies Including: ■ Policy change defining four tardies as an absence; and ■ SAC involvement with parents on this issue.	Tardiness is an issue at Poinciana, in part because of the distance from home to school. The school tried contracting with parents to ensure their children were not tardy, but this didn't work well. In order to emphasize the importance of this issue, policy was changed to specify that four tardies would constitute an unexcused absence. Also, the SAC became involved through efforts to inform and educate parents of the importance of their children being at school on time. Evaluation of the effectiveness of these strategies will be in terms of whether the number of tardies decrease, but the data has not yet been analyzed.	Goal 4

HORACE O'BRYANT MIDDLE SCHOOL PROFILE

SCHOOL DESCRIPTION	
SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS, AS IDENTIFIED BY STAKEHOLDERS	Stakeholders identified certain school characteristics that should be considered in examining improvement initiatives at the school. These characteristics include: ■ Horace O'Bryant (HOB), located in the southernmost Key, is the only middle school in the district that is not part of another school; ■ The school has a long history of strong teacher involvement in decision-making (starting in the early 1970s). Many decisions at the school are made on a consensus basis; ■ The school is over-crowded. This situation should be alleviated by building new additions made possible by the passage of a 1/2 cent sales tax increase; and ■ The school has a highly transient student population.
NUMBER OF STUDENTS AND TEACHERS IN 1995	■ 903 students ■ 58 teachers

HORACE O'BRYANT MIDDLE SCHOOL PROFILE

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS	
NAME OF GROUP FUNCTIONING AS SAC	School Advisory Council
MEMBERSHIP COMPOSITION OF 1994-95 SAC ACCORDING TO MEMBERSHIP LIST PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL (N= 28)	Administrators: 2 Teachers: 6 Support Staff: 1 Parents: 16 Business/Community: 3
SAC MEETINGS	The SAC met every second Tuesday of the month. The SAC met nine times during the 1994-95 school year.
SAC MEMBER ATTENDANCE	Information on SAC attendance was not available for 1994-95. According to the principal, attendance will be kept in 1995-96.
NEW SAC MEMBERS IN 1995	Compared to the 1994-95 SAC, 16 of 17 members of the 1995-96 SAC had not previously served on the SAC. Turnover is typically because parents move or the students don't want their parents involved in school functions. According to the school principal, many parents hold two or three jobs to meet the high cost of living in the Keys. As a result, some parents have little time to attend meetings. Also, due to the large military population in the community, the school principal indicated the community is transient, which may make SAC continuity a problem.
INVOLVEMENT OF SCHOOL STAFF	HOB is a site-based management school, and has five teams made up of teachers from all grade levels and disciplines. Each team has a designated representative on the SAC, and this mechanism assures that all concerns relating to an issue are heard and considered as part of any recommendation or improvement.

HORACE O'BRYANT MIDDLE SCHOOL PROFILE

PERCEPTIONS ON SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS	
MOST POSITIVE CONTRIBUTIONS OF BLUEPRINT 2000	■ Formalizing the process for planning and needs identification; and ■ SAC members said that Blueprint 2000 made them more aware of where improvements are needed.
NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF BLUEPRINT 2000	■ Time associated with data collection, needs assessment and planning; and ■ Some initial confusion about the definition of terms (i.e., "strategy" vs. "objective" and "goal").
FACTORS THAT HAVE HELPED THE SCHOOL IMPROVE	■ The fact that the district had implemented and supported site-based management has given the school a lot of flexibility in solving problems and implementing efforts at improvement; ■ Teachers feel very much a part of the management team because they have input on all aspects of school operations and any anticipated changes; ■ SAC members also believe that they are a part of the school improvement process and that their input is important; and ■ Taxpayers just approved a 1/2 cent increase in the sales tax for school improvements.

(continued)

HORACE O'BRYANT MIDDLE SCHOOL PROFILE

PERCEPTIONS ON SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS	
FACTORS THAT HAVE HINDERED SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT	■ A school-devised objective does not always "fit" into Blueprint 2000 goal areas. Some people spoke of "forcing" a match between the school objectives and Blueprint 2000 goal areas or omitting a school objective from the Blueprint 2000 school improvement plan; ■ Space is a problem in this school. Overcrowding was perceived as hindering improvements that require smaller student groups or space for new activities; and ■ Teachers indicated that financial constraints made implementation of some improvements difficult.

HORACE O'BRYANT MIDDLE SCHOOL PROFILE

1994-95 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	
STATE GOALS INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	All seven state education goals were included in the 1994-95 school improvement plan.
OBJECTIVES INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	The 1994-95 school improvement plan included nine specific improvement objectives in the following categories: ■ Improve career preparedness; ■ Improve skills/knowledge of parents on various issues; ■ Improve academic skills of students; ■ Reduce number of disciplinary actions; ■ Improve student responsibility, cooperativeness, maturity, adjustments, and social skills; ■ Increase computer competency of students; ■ Improve the transition of students/orientation; and ■ Increase training or inservice for teachers/staff.
	(continued)

1994-95 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	
STRATEGIES INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	The 1994-95 school improvement plan included 44 school improvement strategies or activities in the following general areas: ■ Implement specific academic projects; new or modified curriculum; ■ Parent-teacher conferences; provide training and/or material to parents; parental and community involvement activities; publications/information dissemination; ■ Conduct field trips; ■ Increased use of computers in curriculum; technology/equipment purchase/computer hardware; ■ Alternative assessments; ■ Teacher/staff training; ■ Planning, exploring, and assessing options; needs identification/ assessment activities; and ■ Peer counseling/peer groups.
ADEQUATE PROGRESS AND EVALUATION	The 1994-95 school improvement plan includes a description of adequate progress and methods of evaluation.
TRENDS IN PLANS	Horace O'Bryant Middle School's 1994-95 and 1995-96 school improvement plans included definitions of adequate progress, whereas the 1993-94 plan did not. Additionally, the school continued to include all seven state education goals in its plan. Finally, the 1995-96 plan includes many of the same improvement objectives and strategies that were included in the two previous plans.

HORACE O'BRYANT MIDDLE SCHOOL PROFILE

IMPACT OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENTEMENT INITIATIVES ON SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION	
WAIVERS	The school did not request any waivers.
RESOURCE ALLOCATION	The school district has a long history of school-based management. According to the school principal, neither the district nor the school are allocating funds differently as a result of Blueprint 2000.
FUNDS	According to the school, no additional funds have been received to assist with school improvement. Schools were directed by district staff to make improvements within their existing budget. However, as part of the overall district goal of improving technology, the school received from the district $100,000 in 1994-95 and $35,000 in 1995-96. This money was used for technology training and equipment.
DECISION-MAKING	The Blueprint 2000 process has formalized the planning and needs assessment process and increased input from parents. Although the school has always included teachers and stakeholders in the management process, this is now formalized by parental involvement through the SAC.

HORACE O'BRYANT SCHOOL PROFILE

IMPACT OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES ON STUDENTS

School Improvement Cited	Examples of Initiatives	Description and Impact of Initiatives	Relationship to BP 2000 Goals
Improved School Readiness	Various Strategies Including: ■ Articulation with "feeder" elementary schools; and ■ Orientation program for 5th graders and parents.	To reduce the stress on students due to the transition from elementary to middle school, HOB developed an orientation program for incoming students that includes a pre-school orientation for parents and students during which 6th grade teachers are available in their rooms to answer questions as parents and students tour the 6th grade wing. During the first week of school, peer mediators (7th/8th grade students) are available to assist the new 6th graders. In the 1994-95 school year, HOB sent combination locks to one elementary school in the Spring so the 5th graders could learn how to use them. This successful program will be expanded to other elementary schools. Evaluation of the orientation process is done through an informal survey of parents and students. The school improvement plan indicates that both groups were very pleased with the process and reported fewer problems with things such as combination locks.	Goal 1 (continued)

School Improvement Cited	Examples of Initiatives	Description and Impact of Initiatives	Relationship to BP 2000 Goals
Improved Career Readiness	Various Strategies Including: ■ Development of Career Resource Center; ■ Use of career planner; and ■ Guest speakers.	The objective of HOB's career readiness program is to insure that every student by the end of the 8th grade has taken some definite steps in career exploration, as evidenced by completion of a career planner. The Career Resource Center in the HOB library contains a computerized career guidance program and career videos, in addition to printed materials. The school also has a career day for students to learn more about various careers. For example, during the career day held January 19, 1995, there were 30 career booths and 45 volunteer community members providing career information. The school also invites guest speakers to present information to students about various careers. For example, personnel from the U.S.S. Key West have provided career information and have adopted HOB as their community service project. Business education has been added as an option to 8th graders through the exploratory wheel series of courses. About 85 students enrolled in 1995. In addition, 372 students rotated through the Technology Lab during the 1994-95 school year. Evaluation information of these career preparation strategies is not yet available. However, the number of students participating suggests that this is information the students see as valuable.	Goal 2 (continued)

School Improvement Cited	Examples of Initiatives	Description and Impact of Initiatives	Relationship to BP 2000 Goals
Improved Student Performance (Math Skills for Title I Students)	Various Strategies Including: ■ More individualized instruction; ■ More parental involvement; and ■ Math tutoring program.	This group of strategies is targeted at improving math scores on the Stanford Achievement Test by students participating in the federal Title I program. Instructional initiatives included a portfolio for each student that contains an individual task chart and pre/post tests for targeted math skills. According to teachers at the school, more individual instruction is provided, in part through better utilization of teacher aides. The school uses interactive computer programs to assist student learning. Involvement of the parents is considered a priority. Letters are sent from each teacher explaining what they are trying to accomplish and progress reports are sent as needed. The school also initiated a volunteer math tutoring program during the 1994-95 school year. The district office has been active in recruiting tutors and has already received a commitment from the Association of Military Engineers to provide tutors.	Goal 3

Marathon High School Profile

School Description	
School Characteristics, As Identified by Stakeholders	Stakeholders identified certain school characteristics that should be considered in examining improvement initiatives at the school. These characteristics include: ■ Marathon is a combined middle school and high school. Although the middle school operates as a separate unit within the high school, many parents would like it separated completely; ■ The school is a focal point of activities for the community as there are few other sites that can be used for community purposes such as recreation and meetings; ■ The school is located in the middle Keys and many of its students, teachers, and staff must travel some distance to the school; and ■ Most of the school's students are from families that are either toward the upper or lower end of the socioeconomic spectrum.
Number of students and teachers in 1995	■ 640 students ■ 38 teachers

MARATHON HIGH SCHOOL PROFILE

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS

NAME OF GROUP FUNCTIONING AS SAC	School Advisory Council
MEMBERSHIP COMPOSITION OF 1994-95 SAC ACCORDING TO MEMBERSHIP LIST PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL (N=40)	Administrators: 3 Teachers: 3 Support Staff: 1 Parents: 28 Business/Community: 3 Students: 2
SAC MEETINGS	The SAC met on the first Monday of the month at 7:00 p.m. The SAC met nine times during the 1994-95 school year.
SAC MEMBER ATTENDANCE	According to meeting attendance records, administrative representatives generally attended SAC meetings, while teachers and support staff attended approximately half of all meetings. Of 28 parent members, 12 attended at least half of the SAC meetings. One of three business/community representatives attended half of the meetings. There was no documentation of student representative attendance.
NEW SAC MEMBERS IN 1995	Compared to the 1994-95 SAC, 8 of 29 of the members of the 1995-96 SAC have not previously served on the SAC. According to the SAC chair, turnover among SAC members is not a problem. Parents typically leave the SAC when their child graduates.
INVOLVEMENT OF SCHOOL STAFF	Like all the schools in Monroe County, Marathon High School has a long history of teacher involvement through the emphasis on school-based management. To continue this involvement, under Blueprint 2000, all SAC members are assigned to a goal area and are responsible for developing goals and assisting to measure and evaluate the progress made on improvement. Each teacher at the school is a member of a SAC committee.

MARATHON HIGH SCHOOL PROFILE

PERCEPTIONS ON SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS	
MOST POSITIVE CONTRIBUTIONS OF BLUEPRINT 2000	■ It requires the district and school to focus and be explicit in terms of how specific goals will be addressed; ■ It holds schools accountable; ■ It focuses on student performance as a priority and requires efforts directed to improving school performance; and ■ It has improved the emphasis and commitment to staff development.
NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF BLUEPRINT 2000	■ The amount of data contained in the school report to parents was overwhelming for some parents; and ■ There is possibly too much extraneous data required as part of the evaluation of school progress and evaluation of the impact of changes that are being implemented.
FACTORS THAT HAVE HELPED THE SCHOOL IMPROVE	■ The biggest factor has been the district policy of school-based management. An example of this is the decision of the school to implement block scheduling for the 1995-96 year. This effort was based on input from all school-related stakeholders and presented to the district and the Department of Education for their approval; and ■ Schools have the flexibility to apply for grants on their own rather than having to get approval and action from the district.
FACTORS THAT HAVE HINDERED SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT	■ None specified.

MARATHON HIGH SCHOOL PROFILE

1994-95 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	
STATE GOALS INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	All seven state education goals were included in the 1994-95 school improvement plan.
OBJECTIVES INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	The 1994-95 school improvement plan included 17 specific improvement objectives in the following categories: ■ Improve academic skills of at-risk students and special-needs students; ■ Increase scores on standardized tests; ■ Increase graduation rate; ■ Improve reading, writing, and math skills; ■ Improve facilities; ■ Reduce incidence of violence, substance abuse, vandalism, etc.; ■ Hire competent staff, diverse staff; ■ Reduce class size; ■ Increase daily attendance; ■ Improve skills/knowledge of parents on various issues; ■ Improve school safety; ■ Increase number of students taking SAT/ACT; ■ Improve the transition of students/orientation; and ■ Increase training or inservice for teachers/staff.

(continued)

MARATHON HIGH SCHOOL PROFILE

1994-95 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	
EXAMPLES OF CATEGORIES OF STRATEGIES INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	The 1994-95 school improvement plan included 94 school improvement strategies or activities in the following general areas: ■ Implement specific academic projects; new or modified curriculum; ■ Coordinate in-school activities; ■ Agreement/cooperation with other agencies; parent-teacher conferences; provide training and/or material to parents; parental and community involvement activities; publications/information dissemination; ■ Alternative education programs; conduct field trips; set up test preparation; tutorial activities; ■ Increased use of computers in curriculum; purchase/use applied software; ■ Testing of students for placement/placement of students; changes in daily/yearly calendar/school schedule; team projects/teaming of students/cooperative learning; ■ Teacher/staff training; fund raising/seeking activities; ■ Hire additional staff; reduce teacher workload; ■ Improving physical facilities; build new facilities/expand/move to a new school; purchase/build new furniture; ■ Planning, exploring, and assessing options; needs identification/ assessment activities; develop and/or conduct surveys; develop career planners; establish committees, study groups, planning groups; ■ Develop incentives and/or academic recognition activities; counseling/advising; and ■ Other (non-academic) program development; in-school suspension/ Saturday suspension.

(continued)

MARATHON HIGH SCHOOL PROFILE

1994-95 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	
ADEQUATE PROGRESS AND EVALUATION	The 1994-95 school improvement plan includes evaluation procedures but does not include a definition of adequate progress.
TRENDS IN PLANS	Like its 1993-94 and 1994-95 school improvement plans, Marathon High School's 1995-96 plan does not include a definition of adequate progress. Additionally, the school's 1993-94, 1994-95, and 1995-96 plans included all seven state education goals. Finally, the school's 1995-96 plan continues to include many of the same improvement objectives and strategies that were included in the two previous plans.

MARATHON HIGH SCHOOL PROFILE

IMPACT OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES ON SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION	
WAIVERS	Marathon High School requested and has been approved for a waiver permitting "block scheduling" for 1995-96. The purpose is to allow students to take more courses, especially "tech-prep" courses needed to complete vocational education programs and enhance instructional delivery by increasing time in class, particularly in science classes.
RESOURCE ALLOCATION	Because Marathon High School is both a middle and a high school, the normal "FTE" allocation does not cover all costs of the school. This is due to the decision to have a high school in Marathon. An example of FTE not covering costs is an Advanced Placement Calculus course that only has six students in it. Any school "shortfall" is made up by the district.
FUNDS	Marathon High School has received a $300,000 grant for technological "retrofitting" as part of the emphasis on technology. All three Monroe County high schools received a state block grant, R.E.A.L. Grant (Relevant Education for All Learners), for transition to work programs. This amounted to $115,000. In 1993-94, the school also received $470,000 to build a high technology laboratory.
DECISION-MAKING	Blueprint 2000 has had minimal impact on the decision-making process at Marathon High School, because of the long history of site-based management. For many years, Marathon High School has received input from stakeholders in the decision-making process. Under Blueprint 2000, this input has continued through school personnel sitting on the SAC and each of its goal subcommittees. The subcommittees are also involved in reviewing evaluation efforts that assess their goal achievement.

MARATHON SCHOOL PROFILE

IMPACT OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES ON STUDENTS

School Improvement Cited	Examples of Initiatives	Description and Impact of Initiatives	Relationship to BP 2000 Goals
Improved Student Retention and Graduation Rate	Various Strategies Including: ■ Key Choices - Monroe County Alternative Education Centers; and ■ Providing additional options through Tech Prep and Cosmetology program.	Marathon High School is one of three locations for the Key Choices program. This alternative education program provides educational and vocational programs for students not succeeding in the regular high school program. These programs provide a structured environment with an average class size of 10 students. In 1994-95, Marathon High School had 25 students in the program. Also, to increase student retention, the school has created programs that prepare students for work. For example, the Tech Prep program and the Cosmetology program initiated in 1994-95 facilitate high school graduation by providing additional options for the students. According to some stakeholders, these options make a difference in whether some students stay in school. Because the Tech Prep and Cosmetology program just started in 1994-95, it is too early to have evaluative data showing increased retention rates.	Goal 2 (continued)

School Improvement Cited	Examples of Initiatives	Description and Impact of Initiatives	Relationship to BP 2000 Goals
Improved Student Performance	Various Strategies Including: ■ Evaluation of curriculum supporting HSCT; ■ Refocus of teachers' efforts; and ■ Preparing students to take the test.	To improve HSCT scores, particularly in math and communications, the school has made several changes. Teachers re-examined curriculum to ensure that adequate coverage was provided for the core material contained in the HSCT. Teachers were encouraged to develop higher expectations for the students while cooperating across grade levels in developing pre-test practice strategies. Programs to prepare students for the HSCT included a breakfast on test day, motivational speakers on the importance of good test performance, and an appeal to parents and the community to minimize external influence that might negatively impact test performance. In 1995, 94% of students passed the communications subtest and 76% passed the math portion of the HSCT, compared to 80% and 69% in 1994, respectively.	Goal 3
Improved Learning Environment	Various Strategies Including: ■ Programs recognizing attendance; ■ In-school suspension program; and ■ Enlisting help of community employers.	To reduce the number of disciplinary problems, an in-school suspension program was initiated. This program was developed by a committee with input from the community, teachers, and students. To improve attendance at the school, a new attendance policy and truancy plan were developed after discussions with other schools and community agencies. An incentive program for perfect attendance was established. The school's attendance officer is now closely monitoring attendance and encouraging students. Community employers have been asked to cooperate in improving attendance and reducing truancy by observing limits on part-time employment hours for students. School officials and teachers believe that there has been a significant improvement in discipline since the in-school suspension program was initiated. Evaluation indicators for discipline strategies include the number of discipline referrals and suspensions. The goal is to reach an average attendance of 93% and reduce the out-of-school suspension rate by 50% by 1995-96. The school is in the process of evaluating its success in achieving these objectives.	Goals 3, 4

Orange County School District

In September 1995, we reviewed the impact of Blueprint 2000 in the Orange County School District. Located in central Florida, Orange County has a population of approximately 740,167 and is the 6th largest county in Florida. Orange County residents have a diverse racial and ethnic background. Approximately 80% of residents are white, 15% are African American, and 5% are of other racial backgrounds. Approximately 10% of all Orange County residents are Hispanic. Half of the households in Orange County have an annual income of $30,252 or less compared to $27,483 for the state. In addition, 11% of the population in Orange County lives below the poverty level; Orange County has the 47th lowest poverty rate in the state.

Stakeholders identified characteristics they believe should be considered in examining improvement initiatives in the Orange County School District. Orange County is diverse ethnically, racially, and economically and has experienced rapid growth over the past ten years. This growth has brought with it a change in the overall ethnicity of the county. For instance, the number of Orange County residents who are of Hispanic origin has grown rapidly. Coinciding with these changes in the community, Orange County schools are experiencing rapid growth in minority students, particularly those of Hispanic origin. Such growth results in previously rural schools becoming instant Orlando suburbs. Furthermore, the district is experiencing a high percentage of students who transfer into or out of schools during the school year, commonly referred to as "mobility rate." Some stakeholders indicate that they are not sure who schools are testing, and students and teachers cannot build the relationships needed for effective student learning because of the high mobility rate.

Implementation of Blueprint 2000 in Orange County School District

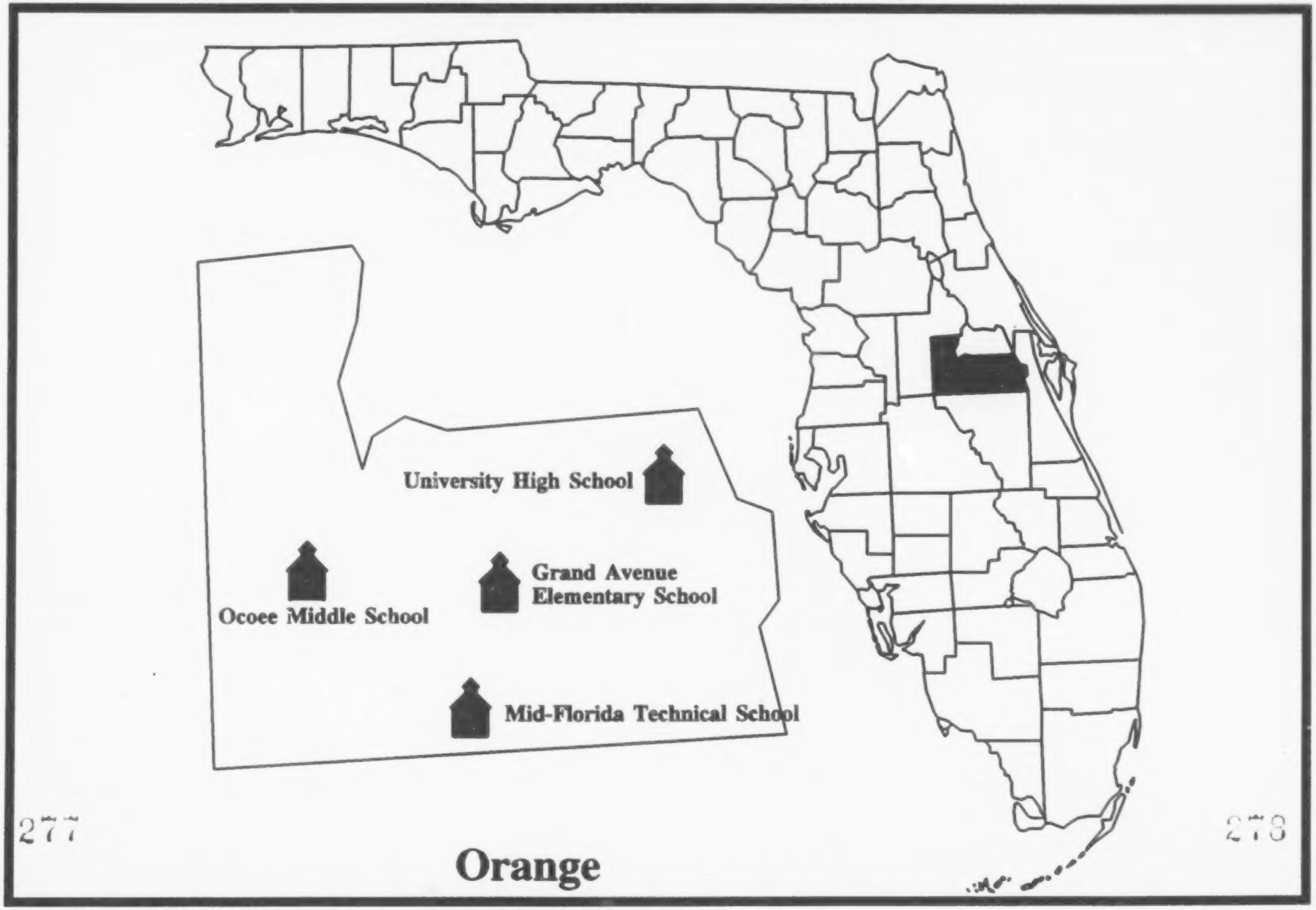
The four schools we visited in the Orange County School District are involved in several activities stakeholders believe will result in needed school improvements. While school improvement plans of all four schools include Blueprint 2000 goal 3, student performance, plans vary in the other state education goals included. Stakeholders believe that schools are implementing many school improvement initiatives relevant to Blueprint 2000 goals and objectives. At the four schools we visited, the most frequently cited improvements include increased scores on standardized tests; improved reading, writing, and math skills; increased student motivation and self-esteem; increased computer competency of students; reduced number of disciplinary actions; and improved career readiness. Schools provided evidence from systematic evaluations to illustrate some of the improvements made such as student grades, attendance records, and numbers of honor roll students. In some instances, schools work with district staff or universities to develop a means of evaluating their projects. In many cases, teacher observation is the primary indicator used to illustrate improvements. Some of the improvement projects are in the process of being implemented and it may be too early to measure their full impact. In some cases, a systematic method of collecting evaluation data has not been developed. We found that none of the schools we visited defined adequate progress in their school improvement plans. Generally, these schools did not detail methods to evaluate the achievement of objectives. District administrators provide direction and assistance to enable schools to improve. In January each year, schools complete a mid-year report that indicates progress made toward accomplishing each annual operating objective and each activity. At the end of the school year all schools report on the progress made in implementing their plans. Educational Improvement Team Staff and appropriate senior directors review the mid-year and end-of-year progress reports. Based on their review and continual monitoring of schools, senior directors make a determination of each school's progress.

District and School Demographics

Orange County School District is the 6th largest school district in the state with 118,666 prekindergarten through 12th grade students and 131 schools. Based on the latest information available from the Department of Education, approximately 54% of students are white, 27% are African American, and 15% are Hispanic compared to state averages of 59%, 25%, and 15%, respectively. One indicator often used to measure the poverty rate of a school district is the percentage of students eligible to receive free or reduced lunches. In 1994, the average percentage of students eligible to receive free or reduced lunches in Orange County was 36%. The average percentage of students eligible to receive free or reduced lunch in the state in 1994 was 43%. The 1994 mobility rates in Orange County (i.e., percentage of students who transferred into or out of the school during the school year) were 47% for elementary schools, 40% for middle schools, and 39% for high schools. The 1994 state median mobility rates were 36% for elementary schools, 31% for middle schools, and 33% for high schools. In addition, 15,885 kindergarten through 12th grade students attended non-public schools in Orange County in 1994-95.

We visited four public schools in Orange County: one elementary school, one middle school, one high school, and one technical institute. The largest school we visited is Mid-Florida Technical Institute with 5,711 students and the smallest school is Grand Avenue Elementary School with 538 students. We also visited Ocoee Middle School with 1,183 students and University High School with 3,108 students. See Exhibit 9 for demographic information on the students attending each school we visited. See Exhibit 10 for student performance data for each school.

Exhibit 8
Location of Schools Visited in Orange County


University High School
Grand Avenue
Elementary School
Ocoee Middle School
Mid-Florida Technical School
Orange

Source: Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability.

Exhibit 9

School	1995 Student Information						
	Number of Students	Percent Eligible to Receive Free/Reduced Lunch	White	African American	Hispanic	Other	Mobility Rate of Students
Grand Avenue Elementary	538	97	11%	86%	3%	0%	79%
Ocoee Middle	1,183	14	70%	15%	13%	3%	34%
University High	3,108	22	66%	5%	24%	5%	43%
Mid-Florida Technical Institute*	5,711	N/A	42%	27%	24%	6%	N/A

Note: Information for free/reduced lunches and mobility rates is based on 1994-95 school year data. * Number of students reflects full time equivalents (FTEs).

Source: Based on information provided by the Department of Education and individual schools.

Exhibit 10

School	Student Performance Data					
	94 NRT Reading or HSCT Communication Scores	95 NRT Reading or HSCT Communication Scores	94 NRT or HSCT Mathematics Scores	95 NRT or HSCT Mathematics Scores	94 Florida Writing Scores	95 Florida Writing Scores
Grand Avenue Elementary	18%	3%	18%	16%	9%	10%
Ocoee Middle	48%	50%	41%	45%	41%	43%
University High	90%	91%	76%	77%	56%	74%

Note: For reading and mathematics in elementary and middle schools, data reflects percentage of students' scores above the 50th national percentile on Reading Comprehension and Mathematics Concepts/Applications subtests on national referenced tests (NRT). Data for high schools consists of passing scores on the Communications and Mathematics sections of the High School Competency Tests (HSCT) for first time test takers during the fall administration. Writing scores reflect the percentage of students scoring "3" and above on a scale of 0 to 6 on the Florida Writes assessment. This table includes student performance data for elementary, middle, and high schools visited

Source: Based on information provided by the Department of Education.

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School Board and District Administration

School board members provide direction for school improvement efforts in Orange County School District and approve school improvement plans. Based on interviews, however, school board members vary in how they carry out their roles. For example, one school board member indicates she reads the plans for each of the approximately 131 schools in the district. She believes that as school advisory councils (SACs) mature, school improvement plan quality will improve. Thus, she "rubber stamps" the plans to allow SAC members such as parents, teachers, community members, and others time to mature and develop quality plans. Other school board members indicate they rely on district staff to review plans and provide feedback to schools. One of these school board members perceives it is district staff's responsibility to evaluate and monitor the implementation of school improvement plans. The Orange County School District in Summer 1995 established a goal that 90% of all 3rd graders who have attended District schools since 1st grade will read at grade level. The school district was in the process of operationalizing the goal during our visit.

District administrators are involved in providing direction and assistance to school administrators and SAC members in developing and implementing school improvement projects and school improvement plans. District administrators work directly with principals, SAC members, and district level support teams to assist and support their school improvement efforts. In addition, district staff provide training to SAC members and develop documents to guide school administrators, teachers, and SAC members through the school improvement process. For example, the School Advisory Council Resource Guide includes information on roles of various stakeholders and resources available to assist schools in their improvement efforts. This guide is given to SAC members and other individuals to provide them with an overview of the school improvement process. The Successful School Improvement Through Strategic Planning document provides guidance on developing school improvement plans such as suggested time lines for developing plans, sample formats, and a checklist for schools to follow when developing school improvement plans. The guide also provides information on the roles and responsibilities of various individuals in strategic planning and school improvement. District staff indicate some documents were developed under the direction of school board members and superintendent with the input of staff from the Department of Education. One such document, District Plan, 1995-96 and Beyond, includes information on the district mission, expectations for the future, and district goals and objectives. As part of their plans, schools are required to address district goals that encompass the seven state education goals. In addition, teachers at some of the schools we visited report that district administrators will be involved in assisting them in evaluating the impact of their school improvement projects.

School Improvement Process

School Advisory Councils (SACs). SAC meetings are generally held either Tuesday or Thursday night once a month. The number of members on 1994-95 SACs of the four schools range from 19 to 30. All school advisory councils have members representing administrators, educational support staff, and the business/community. In addition, University High School and Mid-Florida Technical Institute include student members on their school advisory councils. However, the council at the Mid-Florida Technical Institute, which serves primarily adult students, includes no parent members. Of the four schools we visited, one school's meeting minutes did not always reflect SAC attendance; two schools kept no SAC attendance records; and one school's records indicate meetings were generally attended by education support employees, administrators, and student members. While records indicate SAC meetings at one school were generally well attended, teachers who are SAC members did not attend a majority of meetings. Based on the 1995-96 SAC membership, turnover does not appear to negatively impact SAC's ability to develop and implement school improvement plans at the schools we visited.

Perceptions on the School Improvement Process. Stakeholders (district administrators, school board members, principals, teachers, and SAC members) indicate that Blueprint 2000 provides a focus for school improvement activities by establishing common goals, a consistent framework, and accountability. In addition, increased involvement of stakeholders, particularly parents and community members, in school improvement activities is cited as another primary contribution of Blueprint 2000. While stakeholders mention few negative impacts associated with Blueprint 2000, they indicate that Blueprint 2000 requires more time from teachers and administrators to increase parental involvement, to keep SACs focused on projects that benefit the entire student body, and to complete paperwork associated with planning and implementing school improvement plans.

Stakeholders indicate that several factors helped their schools make improvements. There is a general feeling that leadership of district administrators and school board members helped schools improve. Stakeholders indicate that district administrators encouraged schools to pilot school improvement projects such as block scheduling. In addition, stakeholders indicate that schools were provided additional resources and flexibility to help them implement school improvement projects. Grand Avenue Elementary School, an inner city prototype school, may best illustrate this point. Grand Avenue was provided $1 million and considerable flexibility to make changes. For example, the district approved waivers requested by Grand Avenue to extend the school day and school year. Grand Avenue also received a waiver to the provisions of the union contract of teachers. Stakeholders at Grand Avenue are proud their school is a prototype school. In addition to district leadership, stakeholders cite the leadership of the school principal as making school improvement easier. Other factors include the involvement and support of stakeholders, such as business, community, faculty members, and parents, in the school improvement process and additional training received for both teachers and SAC members.

Several factors are also mentioned as hindering the school improvement efforts of the schools we visited. For instance, while parental and community involvement is generally considered important to the success of school improvement efforts, some schools have difficulty getting parents and business/community persons involved in the school improvement process. In addition, stakeholders at some schools indicate that the high rates of students transferring into or out of the school during the year (defined as the school's "mobility rate") makes school improvement efforts more difficult. For example, 1994 Department of Education information indicates the mobility rate of the four schools we visited ranged from 34% to 79%. Some principals think it is unfair to judge a school's efforts based on test scores of students who attend the school only part of the year. Other factors stakeholders perceive as making school improvement more difficult include uncertainty and fear over the measures the state will use against schools that do not make adequate progress towards their improvement goals, and lack of resources for purchasing instructional materials and equipment and repairing inadequate, aging facilities.

School Improvement Plans

Goals, Objectives, Strategies. While the 1994-95 school improvement plans of all four schools include Blueprint 2000 goal 3 (student performance), plans vary in the other state education goals included. For example, Grand Avenue Elementary's plan includes all seven state education goals; University High School's plan includes goals related to student performance, graduation rate and readiness for postsecondary education and employment, and teachers and staff. In addition to student performance, Ocoee Middle School's and Mid-Florida Technical Institute's plans include state education goals related to graduation rate and postsecondary education, learning environment, teachers and staff, and adult literacy. The school improvement plans most often concentrate on improving reading, writing, and math skills; improving the computer competency of students; improving multicultural awareness; and improving teacher satisfaction. The plans describe numerous strategies or improvement initiatives that schools planned to implement to achieve their objectives. The following improvement strategies are described in two or more plans:

- Implementation of specific academic projects; new/modified curriculum;
- Other non academic program development;
- Agreement/cooperation with other agencies;
- Parental/community involvement activities; publications/information; dissemination;
- Fund raising/seeking activities;
- Teacher/staff training; and
- Develop and/or conduct surveys; planning, exploring, and assessing activities.

The school profiles that follow the district overview section provide additional information about school improvement plans at the four schools we visited.

Trends in Plans Over Time. None of the 1993-94 through 1995-96 Orange County school improvement plans we reviewed include definitions of adequate progress. In addition, the school improvement plans generally do not describe methods to evaluate the achievement of objectives. When evaluation methods are included, it is not clear how the school intends to use that method to determine if the objective is achieved. For example, the evaluation method might be completing an activity rather than measuring the desired outcome. The district office provides schools with a checklist to use when developing their school improvement plans. The district also has a process to evaluate the implementation of plans and determine adequate progress. See page 98 for a description of this process.

Impact of Blueprint 2000

Students. Stakeholders (district administrators, school board members, principals, teachers, and SAC members) believe that schools are implementing many school improvement initiatives relevant to Blueprint 2000 goals and objectives. At the four schools we visited, the most frequently cited improvements include increased scores on standardized tests; improved reading, writing, and math skills; increased student motivation and self esteem; increased computer competency of students; reduced number of disciplinary actions; and improved career readiness. While schools provided evidence resulting from systematic evaluations to illustrate school improvements, in many cases, teacher observation is the primary indicator used to illustrate improvements. Some of the school improvement initiatives are in the process of being implemented and it may be too early to measure their full impact, but in some cases a systematic evaluation method has not been developed.

Teachers. Teachers at the four schools vary in their involvement in the development of school improvement projects. However, teachers generally form committees either based on grade level and subject taught or by area (curriculum, instruction, assessment, and scheduling), develop school improvement strategies, and provide this information to the school advisory council. SACs at three of the four schools write the school's improvement plan, while teacher committees at the fourth school develop the plan with input from the SAC, parents, and the community. At this fourth school, the SAC approves the final school improvement plan. In general, teachers at the four schools do not believe the time and effort they spend planning and implementing school improvement activities takes too much time from their teaching activities. In addition, while teachers at three of the four schools do not believe

Blueprint 2000 takes too much of their time in general, teachers at one school indicate they spend time after school and on weekends on school improvement activities.

School Administration. Stakeholders generally believe that under Blueprint 2000, school administrators receive additional flexibility to allocate resources as needed. For example, one administrator indicated that prior to Blueprint 2000, she had little flexibility in the way she allocated resources for staff positions. Under Blueprint 2000, she decides where additional staff are needed and allocates the funds accordingly. It should be noted that, while the school district has not adopted school based management district-wide, school-based budgeting is being piloted in five schools in the 1995-96 school year and will be expanded to all Orange County schools in the future. Principals at two schools indicate that under Blueprint 2000, stakeholders such as parents, teachers, and business/community members are more involved in making decisions affecting the school. Principals at the other two schools state that Blueprint 2000 does not have an impact on decision-making because they have always sought input from stakeholders when making decisions.

Highlights of School Improvement Initiatives. The four schools we visited in Orange County School District are implementing numerous projects to improve. This section highlights a few of these improvements:

- **Blueprint 2000 Goal 3, Student Performance: Increased Technological Skills of Students and Teachers**. As part of its overall effort to improve student performance, Grand Avenue is involved in several activities to increase technology. Designated as a prototype school in 1994, Grand Avenue received district funds to help implement its technology program. The school used this money to purchase equipment such as VCRs, CD-ROM players, CD-ROMs, still-video cameras/players, satellite receivers, video-disc players, computers, and projectors. This equipment enables teachers to supplement instruction through technology and to bring learning opportunities to children they might not experience otherwise. Three computer workstations and one printer are located in each classroom. Grand Avenue has a television studio and radio station that provides students many technological learning experiences (e.g., broadcasting school events to homes within a two-mile radius of the school). The school also conducts parent computer skills practice sessions where students assist their parents in learning more about computers. After receiving training, students produce a daily morning announcement program, operating cameras and other equipment with little assistance or supervision. Although teachers indicate that it would be difficult to determine the progress students have made because of the technological systems in place, they believe the impact may be observed in the long-term as teachers and students refine and use their computer skills to perform more tasks (e.g., prepare reports).

- **Blueprint 2000 Goal 3, Student Performance:** As part of its overall efforts to improve student performance, Ocoee Middle School implemented a variety of strategies including curriculum changes, special academic projects such as the Middle School Literacy Project, and the year-round school calendar. In an integrated curriculum approach to instruction, a team of teachers plan cooperatively and share instructional responsibilities to reinforce academic skills across subject areas. Ocoee is one of three Orange County Schools involved in the literacy project developed by Vanderbilt University. The Middle School Literacy Project combines various techniques such as interactive technology and reading/writing workshops for adolescent students performing poorly in reading and writing. The year-round calendar was adopted to provide better continuity for students' learning activities. Students do not have a significant amount of downtime at any point in the year, and periodic short breaks help prevent both teachers and students from "burning out" at any time during the year. Stakeholders believe that the modified calendar provided students an opportunity to attend nine-day intersession courses and receive remedial instruction. They have the opportunity to "catch up as they go along" instead of waiting to attend summer school at the end of the school year. Ocoee Middle School staff use various methods of evaluating student progress. For example, evaluation of the Literacy Project is a joint effort of Vanderbilt University and Orange County Public Schools. Students are pre- and post-tested, interviewed, and observed in the classrooms. Teacher and student interviews indicate that the approach is working well. For example, 79% of those interviewed indicate their reading and study habits have improved since entering the program Student attendance and grades also generally improved. When comparing 7th grade achievement data for the 1993 and 1994 school years, the number of students with perfect attendance increased from 58 to 65 ((12%); student intersession success rates (i.e., percentages of grades D or higher, increased from 90% to 95%; and the number of Cardinal Honor Roll students increased from 200 to 224 students ((12%)).

- **Blueprint 2000 Goal 3, Student Performance:** University High School assessed students' needs and visited other schools to identify school improvement ideas. The school explored teaming concepts, block scheduling, interdisciplinary curricula, and alternative assessment. University High School found that traditional school scheduling of 50 minutes per class six to seven classes per day is inefficient in enabling students to learn and retain material provided in the classroom. The school adopted an alternative to the traditional model: 4X4 block scheduling. Under this model, the school year is divided into two semesters and students take four 90-minute classes per semester. Students can earn a total of eight credits per school year. According to the school principal, under 4X4 block scheduling, teachers teach fewer classes per day (three or four periods rather than five or six as under traditional scheduling), thus it takes more teachers to keep class sizes the same as in the past. University High School implemented block scheduling in 1995-96. Teachers, SAC members, administrators, and students are generally optimistic that block scheduling will improve the ability of students to learn by increasing instructional time and allowing students to concentrate on fewer subjects at one time. A district committee has been created to develop an evaluation plan for block scheduling.

- **Blueprint 2000 Goals 2 and 7, Graduation Rate and Readiness for Postsecondary Education and Employment, and Adult Literacy: Improved Employment Skills.** To better ensure that students are prepared to enter the workforce, the Mid-Florida Technical Institute reviewed the competencies employers need from employees and modified its curriculum so that students have these skills upon completion of their vocational programs. For example, MFT incorporated resume writing, interviewing techniques, and application completion skills into vocational programs. Administrators believe that students are more prepared to enter the work force than in the past. This belief is primarily based on anecdotal feedback from industry advisory committees for each program at the school.

School Profiles

The following school profiles contain specific information about the implementation and impact of Blueprint 2000 at each of the schools we visited in Orange County School District. Each school profile provides information on school advisory councils, school improvements cited by stakeholder groups, school improvement plans, and stakeholder perceptions on Blueprint 2000.

Orange County School District

School Profiles

Grand Avenue Elementary School

Ocoee Middle School

University High School

Mid-Florida Technical Institute

GRAND AVENUE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROFILE

SCHOOL DESCRIPTION	
SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS, AS IDENTIFIED BY STAKEHOLDERS	Stakeholders identified characteristics which they believed should be considered in examining improvement initiatives at the school. These characteristics include: ■ Grand Avenue is an inner city school located in a low socioeconomic area; ■ The school's close proximity to the homes of students facilitates involvement in after-school programs; ■ A high percentage of students transferred into and out of the school during the school year (approximately 79% in 1994); ■ The school is an older physical facility constructed in the 1920s that has been recently extensively renovated. Additionally, the front grounds were landscaped into a small park; ■ Grand Avenue was designated a Prototype School in 1994. As a prototype, the school received approximately $1 million to support its improvement initiatives in technology; In addition, the school received strong district and community support and a great deal of flexibility in decision-making; and ■ The school has extended day and school-year programs.
NUMBER OF STUDENTS AND TEACHERS IN 1995	■ 538 students ■ 43 teachers

GRAND AVENUE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROFILE

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS	
NAME OF GROUP FUNCTIONING AS SAC	School Advisory Council (SAC)
MEMBERSHIP COMPOSITION OF 1994-95 SAC ACCORDING TO MEMBERSHIP LIST PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL (N=27)	Administrators: 1 Teachers: 9 Support Staff: 4 Parents: 6 Business/Community: 7
SAC MEETINGS	The SAC met at 5:30 - 7:00 p.m. on Tuesdays. The SAC met a total of 12 times during the 1994-95 school year (once per month).
SAC MEMBER ATTENDANCE	Although attendance records for the 1994-95 school year were not maintained on a regular basis, the SAC Chair stated that about two-thirds of members attended regularly. The principal indicated attendance records will be maintained for future SAC meetings.
NEW SAC MEMBERS IN 1995	Compared to the 1994-95 SAC, 7 of 26 members of the 1995-96 SAC had not served on the SAC previously. Turnover of SAC members was not perceived to affect the ability of the SAC to develop and implement the school's improvement plan. SAC members believed that anyone who has the time and willingness to participate has the opportunity. Reasons for SAC members leaving the SAC prior to their terms expiring or not returning the next year included: high mobility rate and; discomfort of some parent members who feel insecure in their role.
INVOLVEMENT OF SCHOOL STAFF	Teachers who serve on the SAC perceive that anyone who has the time and willingness to participate in school improvement initiatives has the opportunity to do so. The school tries to have equal representation from the staff and other stakeholders on the SAC. The Faculty Advisory Committee, consisting of representatives from all grade levels, receives input regarding the school improvement plan (SIP) from all faculty members and provides this additional information to the SAC who develops the SIP. SAC meetings are open to teachers and other stakeholders not serving on the SAC.

GRAND AVENUE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROFILE

PERCEPTIONS ON SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS	
MOST POSITIVE CONTRIBUTIONS OF BLUEPRINT 2000	■ Provides focus for school improvement activities;
	■ Provides a "level playing field" in which everyone involved in school improvement is playing by the same set of rules; and
	■ Assures increased stakeholder involvement.
NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF BLUEPRINT 2000	■ Initial uncertainty as to what was expected, resulting in additional time spent in developing first school improvement plans;
	■ Perception that a core group of stakeholders "does all the work, to do so much, to affect so many"; and
	■ Amount of time needed to fulfill numerous Blueprint 2000 requirements.
FACTORS THAT HAVE HELPED THE SCHOOL IMPROVE	■ Dynamic leadership of the principal;
	■ Influx of funds, due to prototype status;
	■ Because of its prototype status, Grand Avenue was given a great deal of flexibility (e.g., extending school day/year, rearranging teacher schedules);
	■ Support from business partners;
	■ Support from district staff; and
	■ Waiver creating a common planning time for most teachers.
FACTORS THAT HAVE HINDERED SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT	■ Difficulty in understanding Blueprint 2000's adequate progress requirements;
	■ High turnover in student population raises the question, "Which students are you testing?";
	■ Inadequacy of basing a school's progress entirely on standardized tests; and
	■ Difficulty in getting parental involvement.

GRAND AVENUE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROFILE

1994-95 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	
STATE GOALS INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	■ The 1994-95 school improvement plan includes all seven state education goals.
OBJECTIVES INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	The 1994-95 school improvement plan included 6 objectives in the following general categories: ■ Improve reading, writing, math skills of students; ■ Improve student responsibility, cooperativeness, maturity, adjustment and social skills; ■ Increase the computer competency of students; ■ Increase the computer competency for teachers/staff; and ■ Increase parental involvement.
STRATEGIES INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	The 1994-95 school improvement plan included 34 specific strategies in the following areas: ■ Implementation of specific academic projects; new/modified curriculum; set up special academic sessions; ■ Develop/institute cross-grade articulation programs; ■ Other nonacademic program development; ■ Purchase/use applied software; ■ Counseling/advising; ■ Parental/community involvement activities; publications/information dissemination; and ■ Develop and/or conduct surveys; planning, exploring, and assessing activities.
	(continued)

1994-95 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	
ADEQUATE PROGRESS AND EVALUATION	The 1994-95 school improvement plan includes evaluation procedures but does not detail definitions of adequate progress. See page 98 for a description of the process the district uses to evaluate the implementation of plans and determine adequate progress.
TRENDS IN PLANS	The school's 1994-95 and 1995-96 school improvement plans address all seven state goals. The 1995-96 school improvement plan was basically a reiteration of the 1994-95 school improvement plan except the 1994-95 school improvement goal of improving the learning and work environment was changed to a goal of providing a safer and more secure environment for students and staff. The school, thereby, placed greater emphasis on state goal 5 (school safety and environment). The school improvement plans from 1993-94 through 1995-96 did not include definitions of adequate progress and often did not detail methods to evaluate the achievement of objectives. See page 98 for a description of the process the district uses to evaluate the implementation of plans and determine adequate progress.

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GRAND AVENUE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROFILE

IMPACT OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES ON SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION	
WAIVERS	■ The district approved a teacher contract term waiver, extending the school year to 196 days and teacher workday by 15 minutes to allow most teachers a common block of planning time for team meetings and staff development.
RESOURCE ALLOCATION	■ As a prototype school, Grand Avenue was given a great deal of flexibility in resource allocation decisions. The principal perceives that Blueprint 2000 provides a model for increased site-based decision making, and this management procedure allows more flexibility in making decisions, in general.
FUNDS	■ As a prototype school, during the 1994-95 school year, Grand Avenue received additional district funds (e.g., over $1 million for technology, approximately $40,000 for software materials, and $40,000 for curriculum/materials). The district also provided funding for 10 additional teaching units, approximately $300,000, to help the school meet the additional expectations of the prototype program. As a Title I school, Grand Avenue also received a stipend for $70,000 to purchase instructional materials. In addition, Grand Avenue received $8,375 for a parent involvement/parent education grant for activities such as providing vouchers for school uniforms to parents in exchange for volunteering to tutor or to wash students' uniforms.
DECISION-MAKING	■ Stakeholders perceive that through site-based decision making, they are able to make decisions addressing their school's needs without anyone dictating to them exactly what to do. The principal indicated that teachers, parents, and business/community members are more involved in making decisions that were primarily the principal's responsibility prior to Blueprint 2000 (e.g., budgeting and planning for the school's goals).

GRAND AVENUE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROFILE

IMPACT OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES ON STUDENTS

School Improvement Cited	Examples of Initiatives	Description and Impact of Initiatives	Relationship to BP 2000 Goals
Increased Technological Skills of Students and Teachers	Various Strategies Including: ■ DynaCom System; ■ Television Studio; ■ Radio Station; and ■ Parent Computer Experiences.	Designated as a prototype school in 1994, Grand Avenue received district funds to help implement its technology program. The school purchased the DynaCom system which allows instructors to teach in their classrooms using media equipment that is actually stored and maintained in the media center. The school is networked, and the system allows use of equipment as if it were in the classroom. Equipment available includes VCRs, CD-ROM players, CD-ROMs, still-video cameras/players, satellite receivers, videodisc players, computers, and projectors. This enables teachers to supplement instruction through technology and to bring learning opportunities to children they might not have experienced otherwise. Three computer workstations and one printer are located in each classroom. Teachers have laptop computers which enable them to preview software, make lesson plans and handouts, and administer grades. Grand Avenue has a television studio and radio station which provide students many technological learning experiences (e.g., broadcasting school events to homes within a two-mile radius of the school). The school also conducts parent computer skills practice sessions where students assist their parents in learning more about computers. Teachers reported that based on their observations of students using technological equipment, computer skills have improved. For example, students are using their computer skills to prepare reports that they once wrote by hand.	Goal 3 (continued)

School Improvement Cited	Examples of Initiatives	Description and Impact of Initiatives	Relationship to BP 2000 Goals
Improved Student Performance	Various Strategies Including: ■ Reading Recovery Program; ■ Writing Skills Program; and ■ Extended School Day/School Year.	The school has initiated a number of strategies designed to improve student performance. They have rewritten the curriculum and established a comfortable, consistent learning environment for students where they are treated as active learners doing things for themselves with support as needed. Teachers use various instructional strategies to help improve students' reading and writing skills. For example, they have implemented the Reading Recovery Program, a Whole Language approach to Reading based on placing students in a "print-rich" environment dealing with real-life situations, and Process Writing in which students read and write about real life experiences and things that are important to them. The extended school day and school year calendar of 196 days was adopted to provide better continuity for students' learning activities. Children do not have a significant amount of downtime at any point in the year. The SAC created the calendar with periodic short breaks to keep both teachers and students from "burning out" at any time during the year. Teachers indicated they have observed increases in the number of students and time spent in voluntary sustained silent reading. According to teachers, teacher observation and student portfolios containing individual cumulative Reading Recovery records indicate that student reading skills are improving. However, the 1994-95 standardized test scores do not reflect improvements in reading, math, and writing skills. Most of the programs aimed at improving student performance in these areas were just initiated in 1994-95; therefore, it may still be too early to determine the results of the initiatives. Although the decline in standardized test scores in 1995 was a "heavy blow," the school team is optimistic about student performance on 1996 standardized tests.	Goal 3 (continued)

School Improvement Cited	Examples of Initiatives	Description and Impact of Initiatives	Relationship to BP 2000 Goals
Increased Career Awareness	Kid City (Microsociety)	Through Grand Avenue's Kid City Program, 4th and 5th grade students have established a microsociety in which they apply academic and social skills as they simulate real life experiences. For an hour and fifteen minutes each day, children run their own businesses, banks, government, judicial system, and free press. These children also have the opportunity to pay taxes, earn incentive pay, experience unemployment, write resumes, go through interviews, and pay tuition. School staff describe the program as a "living curriculum." Staff reported that student career awareness increased, based on their observations and conversations with students participating in Kid City activities. Staff also observed decreases in disciplinary referrals since students began participating in the program. In 1993-94, 68% of all teachers had five or less office referrals. In 1994-95, this figure increased to 74%.	Goals 2, 3
Increased Parental Involvement	Various Strategies Including: ▪ Home Visits; ▪ Parent Contracts; and ▪ Parent Volunteer Hours.	As part of the teacher commitment to the prototype and increasing parental involvement in students' learning, the teacher agrees to visit each child's home twice during the year. This allows staff to invite parents to get to know the child's teacher in a more informal way. It helps build the type of rapport necessary between teacher, parent, and child. On one of the visits, the parent, teacher, and chid agree upon contractual goals for the upcoming year. Parents are also involved through volunteer programs (e.g., mentoring 4th grade students). The school keeps an ongoing record of parent volunteer hours which indicates parental involvement is increasing. During the 1994-95 school year, parents recorded 1,200 volunteer hours. For the first two months of the 1995-96 school year, parents had already documented 650 volunteer hours.	Goal 3

OCOEE MIDDLE SCHOOL PROFILE

SCHOOL DESCRIPTION	
SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS, AS IDENTIFIED BY STAKEHOLDERS	Stakeholders identified characteristics which they believed should be considered in examining improvement initiatives at the school. These characteristics include: ■ Ocoee Middle school is an aging physical facility located in a rural community that became an "instant Orlando suburb" when the East-West Expressway was built; ■ The school is undergoing many changes simultaneously. High teacher turnover resulted in 1994-95 when the former principal moved to a new school building taking 18 Ocoee teachers with her. Approximately half of the teachers (30) were hired in 1994-95. Approximately 20 of the new staff were beginning teachers; ■ Ocoee was the first middle school in Orange County to pilot a year - round calendar in 1994-95; ■ There is a great deal of district, community, and parental support for change efforts; and ■ The students who attend the school represent a disparity of income and growing cultural diversity (e.g., more Hispanics).
NUMBER OF STUDENTS AND TEACHERS IN 1995	■ 1,183 students ■ 66 teachers

OCOEE MIDDLE SCHOOL PROFILE

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS	
NAME OF GROUP FUNCTIONING AS SAC	School Advisory Council (SAC)
MEMBERSHIP COMPOSITION OF 1994-95 SAC ACCORDING TO MEMBERSHIP LIST PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL (N=19)	Administrators: 1 Teachers: 9 Support Staff: 1 Parents: 8 Business/Community: 0
SAC MEETINGS	Meetings were generally held at 7:00 p.m. on the second Tuesday of every other month. The SAC met about 4 times during the 1994-95 school year.
SAC MEMBER ATTENDANCE	While minutes of SAC meetings were kept, attendance of SAC members was not kept on a regular basis. However, according to the SAC chair, approximately half the SAC members attended meetings on a regular basis. According to the principal, attendance will be kept at future SAC meetings.
NEW SAC MEMBERS IN 1995	Compared to the 1994-95 SAC, 15 of 20 members of the 1995-96 SAC had not served on the school's advisory council previously. SAC turnover was not perceived as affecting the SAC's ability to develop and implement the school improvement plan; however, sporadic attendance, in general, is perceived to be a problem. Reasons for SAC members leaving the SAC prior to their terms expiring or not returning the next year included: involvement of middle school students in many activities (e.g., sports, for which parents have to provide transportation); and conflicts with other commitments.

(continued)

OCOEE MIDDLE SCHOOL PROFILE

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS	
INVOLVEMENT OF SCHOOL STAFF	The principal stated the entire school staff is involved in developing and implementing the school improvement plan (SIP). The faculty is divided into groups set up by the principal representing a cross section of grades and subject areas to develop the SIP. After developing a list of improvement areas, teachers rank-order their priorities, develop strategies, and establish time lines. Their ideas are presented to the SAC, parents, and community members for additional input. The committees then revise the plan and work with other stakeholders to decide who is responsible for identified improvement areas. The plan is brought back to the SAC for final approval. The school also has approximately 35-40 Business Partners in Education who formally meet twice per year to review the SIP and give input into the development of next year's plan. Although these partners are not formally members of the SAC, they are involved in the development and review of the plan.

OCOEE MIDDLE SCHOOL PROFILE

PERCEPTIONS ON SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS	
MOST POSITIVE CONTRIBUTIONS OF BLUEPRINT 2000	■ Emphasizes increased parental involvement; ■ Encourages increased community involvement; and ■ Provides focus for school improvement initiatives.
NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF BLUEPRINT 2000	■ Blueprint 2000 process is cumbersome (e.g., difficulty in meeting racial/ethnic representation requirements for SAC membership); and ■ Requires more paperwork to document things every school should do anyway.
FACTORS THAT HAVE HELPED THE SCHOOL IMPROVE	■ Leadership and encouragement of the principal and administrative team; ■ Flexibility in resource allocation (e.g., allocating textbook funds for software); ■ Some additional funding (e.g., Parent Involvement Grants); ■ Support from district staff; ■ Increased parental/community involvement; ■ Increased faculty involvement; ■ Provision of teacher inservice; and ■ District inservice for SAC members.
FACTORS THAT HAVE HINDERED SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT	■ Inadequate aging physical facilities (e.g., some buildings/classrooms are too small to accommodate the large numbers of students, inadequate wiring); ■ Lack of funding for instructional materials/equipment (e.g., computers, science equipment); and ■ Lack of approval on proposed certification waiver to allow middle school teachers to teach out-of-field.

OCOEE MIDDLE SCHOOL PROFILE

1994-95 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	
STATE GOALS INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	■ Goal 2: Graduation Rate and Readiness for Postsecondary Education and Employment; ■ Goal 3: Student Performance; ■ Goal 4: Learning Environment; and ■ Goal 7: Adult Literacy.
OBJECTIVES INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	The 1994-95 school improvement plan included 7 objectives in the following general categories: ■ Improve reading, writing, and math skills of students; ■ Reduce the incidence of violence, substance abuse, and vandalism; ■ Improve the computer competency of students; and ■ Improve multicultural awareness, interaction and cooperation.
	(continued)

OCOEE MIDDLE SCHOOL PROFILE

1994-95 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	
STRATEGIES INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	The 1994-95 school improvement plan included 30 specific strategies in the following areas: ■ Implementation of specific academic projects such as integrated curriculum; ■ Implementation of multicultural activities; ■ Develop incentive and/or academic recognition activities; peer counseling/peer groups; ■ Agreement/cooperation with other agencies;parent-teacher conferences; ■ Improving physical facilities; ■ Conduct field trips; ■ Teacher/staff training; ■ Needs identification/assessment activities; planning, exploring and assessing activities; and ■ Changes in daily/yearly calendar/school schedule.
ADEQUATE PROGRESS AND EVALUATION	The 1994-95 school improvement plan does not detail definitions of adequate progress or evaluation procedures. See page 98 for a description of the process the district uses to evaluate the implementation of plans and determine adequate progress.

OCOEE MIDDLE SCHOOL PROFILE

1994-95 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	
TRENDS IN PLANS	The 1993-94 school improvement plan addressed 4 of the 7 state goals: student performance, learning environment, school safety and environment, and teachers and staff. Both the 1994-95 and the 1995-96 school improvement plans contained only 3 goals but addressed 6 of the 7 state goals: graduation rate and readiness for postsecondary education and employment, student performance, learning environment, school safety and environment and teachers and staff. Both plans focused primarily on goal 3 - student performance. The school improvement plans from 1993-94 through 1995-96 did not contain detail definitions of adequate progress or methods to evaluate whether objectives were achieved. See page 98 for a description of the process the district uses to evaluate the implementation of plans and determine adequate progress.

OCOEE MIDDLE SCHOOL PROFILE

IMPACT OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES ON SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION	
WAIVERS	The school has not requested any waivers, but has strongly supported the district in its requests for state waivers. The district requested a state waiver in certification requirements to allow middle school teachers to teach out-of-field; however, the waiver was denied. The district requested and received a state waiver regarding the allocation of textbook funds, allowing the school to purchase computer software with a portion of the money. This facilitated the implementation of their goal to improve technological skills.
RESOURCE ALLOCATION	The school makes a number of resource allocation decisions based on needs identified through its school improvement plan. A state waiver allowing increased flexibility in resource allocation enabled Ocoee to use a portion of the funds previously designated for textbooks to purchase computer software. The school also has increased flexibility in determining how their staffing budget dollars will be spent. In previous years, the principal received a specific number of teacher allocations for designated areas and had to request permission to change allocations. Now, the school decides where additional staff are needed and allocates funds accordingly.
FUNDS	In addition to lottery enhancement funds for school improvement, Ocoee Middle School received additional funds to support its school improvement initiatives through a $4,000 state-funded Parent Involvement Grant and a federally-funded SAFE Schools Grant which was used to support various initiatives (e.g., Literacy Program, campus police liaison officer). In addition, each district middle school received $3,000 in SAFE Schools funds for school safety programs. In 1995, the district provided funds for technological improvements (i.e., five additional computers and teacher inservice). The school received $8,700 for the 1995-96 school year to support an After-School Homework Program. The program is open to any student, and faculty members are available to assist students two afternoons per week.

OCOEE MIDDLE SCHOOL PROFILE

IMPACT OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES ON SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION	
DECISION-MAKING	Staff perceived that school-based management has aided the school in making improvements. The entire school staff, along with parents and community members, are involved in developing and implementing its school improvement plan. The principal stated that each year Ocoee is moving more toward school-based management. Although she believes that her leadership style was already in line with school-based management methods before Blueprint 2000, she perceives that Blueprint 2000 has formalized the process.

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OCOEE MIDDLE SCHOOL PROFILE

IMPACT OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES ON STUDENTS

School Improvement Cited	Examples of Initiatives	Description and Impact of Initiatives	Relationship to BP 2000 Goals
Improved Student Performance	Various Strategies Including: ■ Integrated Curriculum; ■ Middle School Literacy Project; and ■ Year-Round School Calendar.	The school has implemented a variety of strategies including curriculum changes, special academic projects such as the Middle School Literacy Project, and the year-round school calendar. In an integrated curriculum approach to instruction, a team of teachers plan cooperatively and share instructional responsibilities to reinforce academic skills across subject areas. Ocoee is one of 12 pilot sites in Orange County involved in the literacy project developed by Vanderbilt University. The Middle School Literacy Project combines various techniques such as interactive technology and reading/writing workshops for adolescent students performing poorly in reading and writing. Qualifying students are in the project for two hours each day and return to the regular classroom setting for the remainder of the school day. The year-round calendar helps provide better continuity for students' learning activities. This modified calendar also provides students needing remediation an opportunity to attend nine-day intersession courses where they receive supplementary instruction in areas where they are experiencing failure. They have the opportunity to "catch up as they go along" instead of waiting to attend summer school at the end of the school year. Ocoee Middle School staff use various methods of evaluating student progress. For example, evaluation of the Literacy Project is a joint effort of Vanderbilt University and Orange County Public Schools. Students are pre- and post-tested, interviewed, and observed in the classrooms. Teacher and student interviews indicate that the approach is working well. For example, 79% of those interviewed indicated their reading and study habits had improved since entering the program. Student attendance and grades also generally improved. When comparing 7th grade achievement data for the 1993 and 1994 school years, the number of students with perfect attendance increased from 58 to 65 (12%); student intersession success rates (i.e., percentages of grades D or higher, increased from 90% to 95%; and the number of Cardinal Honor Roll students increased from 200 to 224 students (12%)).	Goal 3 (continued)

School Improvement Cited	Examples of Initiatives	Description and Impact of Initiatives	Relationship to BP 2000 Goals
Increased Self-Esteem	SAFE Program (School Assistance and Family Empowerment)	The SAFE Program grew out of the belief that students' emotional and behavioral problems can interfere with the learning process and must be dealt with for learning to occur. The SAFE Program offers a variety of prevention and intervention programs including individual counseling, case management, teacher mentors, support groups, referrals for mental health services and family education, drug awareness programs, conflict mediation, peer mediation, parent resource information, referrals to the suspension reduction counseling program, cultural awareness group, and non-violence group. The benefits of the SAFE program can be evaluated through methods such as observation and decreases in the number of students requesting peer mediation. Teachers observe that students participating in the program appear to be happier and more self-reliant than before. When comparing Peer Mediation Statistical Report data from the first and third six weeks periods for the 1994-95 school year, the number of referrals dropped from 94 to 30 (68 % decrease).	Goals 3, 4

UNIVERSITY HIGH SCHOOL PROFILE

SCHOOL DESCRIPTION	
SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS, AS IDENTIFIED BY STAKEHOLDERS	Stakeholders identified characteristics which they believed should be considered in examining improvement initiatives at the school. These characteristics include: ■ While the school facility was built in 1990 to accommodate 2,000 students, at the beginning of the 1995-96 school year the school had approximately 3,100 students; ■ The school serves a large geographic area and many students travel long distances on buses to and from school; ■ The school is located in an area which was previously rural that has experienced rapid development; and ■ The percentage of students who transferred into or out of the school during 1994 was approximately 40% making it difficult to assess the impact of improvements on students at the school.
NUMBER OF STUDENTS AND TEACHERS IN 1995	■ 3,108 students ■ 154 teachers

UNIVERSITY HIGH SCHOOL PROFILE

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS

NAME OF GROUP FUNCTIONING AS SAC	School Advisory Council (SAC)
MEMBERSHIP COMPOSITION OF 1994-95 SAC ACCORDING TO MEMBERSHIP LIST PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL (N=30)	Administrators: 1 Teachers: 11 Support Staff: 1 Parents: 8 Business/Community: 1 Students: 8
SAC MEETINGS	SAC meetings were held approximately once per month at 6:30 p.m. or 7:00 p.m. either Tuesday or Thursday night.
SAC MEMBER ATTENDANCE	In 1994-95, records of meeting attendance were not maintained by the school. However, according to the school principal, the SAC chair will keep attendance records for future meetings.
NEW SAC MEMBERS IN 1995	Compared to the 1994-95 SAC, 5 of 19 members of the 1995-96 SAC had not previously served on the SAC. Member turnover was not perceived as negatively impacting the SAC's ability to develop and implement the school improvement plan.
INVOLVEMENT OF SCHOOL STAFF	The entire body of the SAC developed a needs assessment list of areas they felt needed attention. In a series of faculty meetings, the entire staff developed its own list of areas of concern. Both lists were then combined with additional input from the administrative staff. The SAC was then divided into three subcommittees, each with its own emphasis. These areas included curriculum and instruction, student services, and community resources. Members of these subcommittees sought and received regular input from other staff members. SAC concerns and ideas were communicated to the faculty throughout the year at faculty meetings.

UNIVERSITY HIGH SCHOOL PROFILE

PERCEPTIONS ON SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS	
MOST POSITIVE CONTRIBUTIONS OF BLUEPRINT 2000	■ Provides goals and stresses accountability; ■ Provides more freedom than in the past to be creative; and ■ Increases involvement of the community in school improvements through establishing partnerships.
NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF BLUEPRINT 2000	■ Requires additional time and effort to increase the involvement of parents and get them to focus on real improvements rather than their own agendas or cosmetic changes; and ■ Erroneous conclusions are being drawn about school performance because people compare test scores across schools that are very different. There are also inconsistencies in how tests are being administered and to whom they are being administered.
FACTORS THAT HAVE HELPED THE SCHOOL IMPROVE	■ Supportive principal who asks for input on issues and gets the resources needed to accomplish school objectives; ■ Support from the district office allowing the school to pilot projects such as block scheduling; ■ Additional flexibility provided to schools to use a portion of their textbook budget to purchase computer software; ■ Increased emphasis placed on staff training that includes what teachers should be teaching; ■ Increased technology; ■ A very active and involved student council; ■ An involved SAC that provides input and validates problems; and ■ The ability of teachers to visit other schools and observe projects that might be implemented at their school.
	(continued)

UNIVERSITY HIGH SCHOOL PROFILE

PERCEPTIONS ON SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS	
FACTORS THAT HAVE HINDERED SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT	■ Lack of resources, overcrowded facilities, class size too large; ■ Insufficient assessment of school improvement projects; ■ Staff turnover including changes in administrators; ■ Not enough parents on the SAC; and ■ A fear of the punitive measures the state will take against schools that are not improving.

UNIVERSITY HIGH SCHOOL PROFILE

1994-95 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	
STATE GOALS INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	■ Goal 2: Graduation Rate and Readiness for Postsecondary Education and Employment; ■ Goal 3: Student Performance; and ■ Goal 6: Teachers and Staff.
OBJECTIVES INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	The 1994-95 school improvement plan included 5 objectives in the following general categories: ■ Expand course offerings; ■ Research, evaluate, develop alternative assessments; ■ Improve the academic skills of students; ■ Increase the computer competency of students; and ■ Increase training or inservice for teachers/staff.
STRATEGIES INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	The 1994-95 school improvement plan included 29 specific strategies in the following areas: ■ Implementation of specific academic projects; new/modified curriculum; pilot projects; ■ Utilize integrated instruction approach/block scheduling; ■ Develop, modify, implement discipline plan; ■ Agreement/cooperation with other agencies; parental/community involvement activities; publications/information dissemination; ■ Teacher/staff training; fund raising/seeking activities; ■ Technology equipment/computer hardware purchases; increased use of computers in the curriculum; ■ Purchase other equipment; and ■ Develop and/or conduct surveys; needs identification/assessment activities.

(continued)

UNIVERSITY HIGH SCHOOL PROFILE

1994-95 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	
ADEQUATE PROGRESS AND EVALUATION	The 1994-95 school improvement plan did not detail definitions of adequate progress or evaluation procedures. See page 98 for a description of the process the district uses to evaluate the implementation of plans and determine adequate progress.
TRENDS IN PLANS	The goal statements of the 1993-94 and the 1994-95 school improvement plans were identical, but the objectives of the plans were different. The 1993-94 improvement plan identified 8 objectives addressing 5 of the 7 state goals (graduation rate and readiness for postsecondary education and employment, student performance, learning environment, school safety, and teachers and staff) and the 1994-95 improvement plan identified 5 objectives addressing 3 of the state goals (graduation rate and readiness for postsecondary education and employment, student performance, and teachers and staff). Both school improvement plans emphasized state goal 3 - student performance. The 1995-96 school improvement plan identified 9 objectives addressing 4 of the state goals (graduation rate and readiness for postsecondary education and employment, student performance, learning environment, and school safety and environment) with emphasis on goals 3 and 4 - student performance and learning environment. None of the school improvement plans detail definitions of adequate progress or evaluation methods. See page 98 for a description of the process the district uses to evaluate the implementation of plans and determine adequate progress.

UNIVERSITY HIGH SCHOOL PROFILE

IMPACT OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES ON SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION		
WAIVERS	■	The school requested and received two waivers from the school board: block scheduling and graduation requirements.
RESOURCE ALLOCATION	■	It was not perceived that the school board or school administrators are allocating resources much differently under Blueprint 2000. However, the school received three additional staff positions to enable it to keep teacher to student ratios the same under block scheduling as they were under traditional scheduling (See "Impact of School Improvement Initiatives on Students"). In addition, the school has some increased flexibility to reallocate monies budgeted for textbooks to software purchases.
FUNDS	■	In 1993-94, University High School received a retrofitting grant in the amount of $150,000 from the Department of Education. In 1994-95, the school received an additional $850,000 from the Department of Education to finish wiring for technology. Administrators also believed that the $10,000 received in school improvement funds helped the school make needed improvements by enabling teachers to visit other schools to learn about various school improvement initiatives.
DECISION-MAKING	■	Blueprint 2000 was not perceived as having an impact on decision-making at the school because the principal has always included input from faculty and SAC members when making decisions.

UNIVERSITY HIGH SCHOOL PROFILE

IMPACT OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES ON STUDENTS

School Improvement Cited	Examples of Initiatives	Description and Impact of Initiatives	Relationship to BP 2000 Goals
Improved Student Performance	Scheduling Changes	University High School spent a considerable amount of time assessing needs of students and visiting other schools to identify school improvement ideas. As part of this needs assessment process, the school explored teaming concepts, block scheduling, interdisciplinary curricula, and alternative assessment. In assessing needs, University High School found that traditional school scheduling of 50 minutes per class six to seven classes per day was inefficient in enabling students to learn and retain material provided in the classroom. The school adopted an alternative to the traditional model: 4X4 block scheduling. Under this model, the school year is divided into 2 semesters and students take four 90-minute classes per semester. Students can earn a total of 8 credits per school year. According to the school principal, under 4X4 block scheduling, teachers teach fewer classes per day (three or four periods rather than five or six as under traditional scheduling), thus it takes more teachers to keep class sizes the same as in the past. Block scheduling was implemented at University High School in the beginning of the 1995-96 school year, thus, evaluation of impact may be best measured in the future. Teachers, SAC members, administrators, and students were generally optimistic that block scheduling would improve the ability of students to learn by increasing instructional time and allowing students to concentrate on fewer subjects at one time. While no method has yet been developed to evaluate the impact of block scheduling, a district committee has been created to develop an evaluation plan.	Goals 3, 4 (continued)

School Improvement Cited	Examples of Initiatives	Description and Impact of Initiatives	Relationship to BP 2000 Goals
Reduced Discipline Problems	Changes to Discipline Policy	To reduce the behavioral problems, the school made several changes to its discipline policy including creating Saturday suspension, requiring parental involvement, and requiring community service. Administrators indicated that when students were suspended out of school they tended to fall behind in classwork. Saturday suspension, in particular, was adopted to discipline students while keeping them in class learning. Approximately 60 students have participated in Saturday suspension. Administrators hope that Saturday suspension and the other changes made to University High School's discipline policy would, over time, reduce behavioral problems at the school, especially when students realize they will lose their Saturday's. Administrators indicated it is too early to measure the impact of these changes; however, in doing so they will rely on reductions in the number of disciplinary actions.	Goals 5, 3
Improved Technology Skills of Students	Retrofitting and Staff Training	The school has received a retrofit grant from the state and has begun the process of retrofitting. In addition, teachers have received training specifically in the use of technology. These changes should improve the ability of students to use technology that they can apply to researching techniques and to be more prepared for postsecondary schools and careers. Those we spoke to indicated that the full impact of these changes would be best measured in the future. However, some of these individuals believed that University High School needed to conduct more assessments of all improvement areas.	Goals 3, 4

MID-FLORIDA TECHNICAL INSTITUTE PROFILE

SCHOOL DESCRIPTION	
SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS, AS IDENTIFIED BY STAKEHOLDERS	Stakeholders identified characteristics which they believed should be considered in examining improvement initiatives at the school. These characteristics include: ■ Most of the students attending Mid-Florida Technical Institute (MFT) are postsecondary; less than 5% are high school students; ■ There are four technical centers in Orange County; ■ The school offers training through approximately 52 programs including adult education courses, English for speakers of other languages, and technical programs; ■ Each of the 48 technical programs has an advisory committee made up of 12-15 members from the business community; ■ Based on its FTE count, MFT is the largest technical center in the state of Florida; and ■ The school experiences a tremendous turnover in students. Students may enroll or leave throughout the year.
NUMBER OF STUDENTS AND TEACHERS	■ 5,711 full time equivalent students ■ Approximately 56,000 students in 1994-95 (unduplicated, full and part-time) ■ 158 full-time teachers The school also has over 1,500 part-time teachers.

MID-FLORIDA TECHNICAL INSTITUTE PROFILE

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS	
NAME OF GROUP FUNCTIONING AS SAC	School Advisory Council (SAC)
MEMBERSHIP COMPOSITION OF 1994-95 SAC ACCORDING TO MEMBERSHIP LIST PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL (N=20)	Administrators: 4 Teachers: 5 Support Staff: 7 Parents: 0 Business/Community: 1 Students: 3
SAC MEETINGS	SAC meetings were held approximately once per month at 7:00 a.m., during the week.
SAC MEMBER ATTENDANCE	Based on the SAC membership list provided by the school district and attendance records, administrators, education support employees, and students generally attended the meetings held during 1994-95 school year. While meetings were generally well attended, several teachers listed as members of the 1994-95 SAC did not attend a majority of meetings. It was perceived that business representatives' attendance at meetings could be improved. However, business representatives often have competing priorities that make it difficult to be part of the SAC.
NEW SAC MEMBERS IN 1995	Compared to the 1994-95 SAC, 5 of 27 members of the 1995-96 SAC had not previously served on the SAC. SAC turnover was not perceived as having a negative impact on the SAC members' ability to develop and implement the school improvement plan. The reasons SAC members leave either prior to their terms expiring or do not return the next year included completion of students' vocational programs, members deciding not to serve on the SAC, and some SAC members are not reelected. It was suggested that extending the terms of SAC members from one year to two or more years and better communication of the direct benefit of SAC membership to business members may reduce turnover and improve attendance at SAC meetings.

(continued)

MID-FLORIDA TECHNICAL INSTITUTE PROFILE

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS	
INVOLVEMENT OF SCHOOL STAFF	School instructional staff and employees who are not members of the SAC are kept aware of the school's improvement objectives developed by the SAC through staff meetings with administrators. Members of the faculty committee are elected and serve on the SAC. In addition, faculty members are implementing strategies that affect their particular instructional area.

MID-FLORIDA TECHNICAL INSTITUTE PROFILE

PERCEPTIONS ON SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS	
MOST POSITIVE CONTRIBUTIONS OF BLUEPRINT 2000	■ Increases the involvement of stakeholders in the school improvement process; ■ Provides focus for school improvement planning; and ■ Helps increase the success of students once they enter the workforce.
NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF BLUEPRINT 2000	■ Time requirements associated with planning and implementing school improvement plans.
FACTORS THAT HAVE HELPED THE SCHOOL IMPROVE	■ The creation of a school foundation for fund raising; ■ Involvement of stakeholders working together as a group; and ■ Focusing on a few goals rather than many.
FACTORS THAT HAVE HINDERED SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT	■ Lack of financial resources; ■ The failure to acknowledge the unique mission of technical schools compared to schools that serve kindergarten through 12th grade when applying Blueprint 2000 and evaluating improvements; and ■ Inconsistent participation of business/community members in school advisory council meetings.

MID-FLORIDA TECHNICAL INSTITUTE PROFILE

1994-95 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	
STATE GOALS INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	■ Goal 3: Student Performance; ■ Goal 4: Learning Environment; and ■ Goal 6: Teachers and Staff.
OBJECTIVES INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	The 1994-95 school improvement plan included objectives in the following general categories: ■ Establish school foundations; ■ Expand course offerings; ■ Improve teacher satisfaction; and ■ Improve multicultural awareness, interaction and cooperation.
STRATEGIES INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	The 1994-95 school improvement plan included strategies in the following areas: ■ Fund raising/seeking activities; establish committees, study groups, planning groups; planning, exploring, and assessing activities; and ■ Develop and/or conduct surveys.
ADEQUATE PROGRESS AND EVALUATION	The 1994-95 school improvement plan did not detail definitions of adequate progress or evaluation procedures. See page 98 for a description of the process the district uses to evaluate the implementation of plans and determine adequate progress.
TRENDS IN PLANS	The 1993-94 school improvement plan contained 3 goals that addressed 2 of the state's 7 goals (student performance and learning environment). The 1994-95 school improvement plan contained 4 goals and addressed 3 of the state's 7 goals: student performance, learning environment, and teachers and staff). The 1995-96 school improvement plan identified 2 objectives, but the relationship of the objectives to the state goals is not clearly defined. See page 98 for a description of the process the district uses to evaluate the implementation of plans and determine adequate progress.

MID-FLORIDA TECHNICAL INSTITUTE PROFILE

IMPACT OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES ON SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION	
WAIVERS	■ While MFT received a waiver from the Department of Labor to allow apprentices under 18 years old to visit worksites, this was not part of the school improvement plan. The school requested no other waivers.
RESOURCE ALLOCATION	■ Under school based management and Blueprint 2000, the school has received increasingly more flexibility to allocate resources as the director deems necessary. For example, in recent years MFT has allocated more of its budget to funding technology and staff development. It was perceived that this increased flexibility has helped the school make needed improvements. However, school administrators noted approximately 87% of the school's budget is allocated to salaries and benefits; only about 10% of the budget is able to be shifted.
FUNDS	■ In 1994-95, MFT received a retrofitting grant from the Department of Education in the amount of $338,000 to make improvements in technology possible. During the same year, the school also received a Quick Response Grant from the state Department of Commerce in the amount of $1.3 million to develop a computer-based training course for employees of the Martin Marietta Corporation. The school will be able to keep the equipment purchased with grant money, and staff received computer training which will benefit both the staff and students at MFT.
DECISION-MAKING	■ Under Blueprint 2000, staff are more involved in discussing the school's improvement objectives, which are published for staff members and discussed at faculty meetings. For example, based on the budget and school improvement objectives, in 1994-95 staff decided to create a school foundation to raise private donations.

MID-FLORIDA TECHNICAL INSTITUTE PROFILE

IMPACT OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES ON STUDENTS

School Improvement Cited	Examples of Initiatives	Description and Impact of Initiatives	Relationship to BP 2000 Goals
Improved Employment Skills	Modified Curriculum	To better ensure that students are prepared to enter the workforce, the school reviewed the competencies employers need from employees and modified its curriculum so that students have these skills upon completion of their vocational programs. For example, MFT has now incorporated resume writing, interviewing techniques, and application completion skills into vocational programs. Administrators believe that students are more prepared to enter the work force than in the past. This belief is primarily based on anecdotal feedback from industry advisory committees for each program at the school.	Goals 2, 7
Improved Data Reporting	Changes in Reporting Methods	While students leaving programs were being employed, MFT administrators indicated there was no system in place that accurately reflected these successes. School administrators indicated that MFT has established benchmarks to better measure the success of their programs in employing students. These benchmarks stress instructor follow-up to determine how many students were actually employed after leaving MFT. While the new system for capturing this information is in place, MFT is relying on instructors to collect this information as students complete programs. The actual impact of this more intensive follow-up by instructors may be demonstrated in the future as instructors begin collecting this information on new students who complete programs and are placed.	Goal 2

(continued)

School Improvement Cited	Examples of Initiatives	Description and Impact of Initiatives	Relationship to BP 2000 Goals
Improved Computer Literacy	Technology Purchases and Retrofitting	The school has taken steps to update technology so that students have the computer skills needed to compete in the work force and to meet the needs of employers. In addition to purchasing additional computer software and hardware for use in the classroom, MFT received a grant from the Florida Department of Education in 1993-94 and has begun preliminary work to improve its computer networking capabilities. Even though the school is in the process of updating its computer networking capabilities, administrators believed that students who complete program components demonstrate mastery of using appropriate industry technology since virtually all programs are competency based.	Goals 3, 4

Sarasota County School District

In September 1995, we reviewed the impact of Blueprint 2000 in the Sarasota County School District. Located in southwest Florida, Sarasota County has a population of approximately 296,002 and is the 14th largest county in the state. Approximately 90% of residents are white, 9% are African American, and 1% are of other racial backgrounds. Approximately 2% of all Sarasota County residents are Hispanic. Half of the households in Sarasota County have an annual income of $29,926 or less compared to $27,483 for the state. In addition, 7% of the population in Sarasota County lives below the poverty level; Sarasota County has the lowest poverty rate in the state. Sarasota County residents are among the most educated in the state of Florida; approximately 21% of persons 25 or older are college graduates.

Stakeholders identified characteristics that they believe should be considered in examining school improvement initiatives in the Sarasota County School District. Sarasota County is perceived by many as a highly cultural, affluent community. The county represents a variety of economic, racial, and cultural groups. Reflecting this diversity, students attending Sarasota County schools represent numerous nationalities and abilities. For example, the school district serves a large number of both gifted students and students with special learning needs.

Implementation of Blueprint 2000 in Sarasota County

During our visit to Sarasota County we found that schools are involved in numerous projects they believe will result in needed school improvements. However, two primary factors appear to affect Sarasota's school improvement efforts. First, during our visit the school district was undergoing tremendous upheaval and transition due to budget shortfalls that appear to affect how stakeholders view Blueprint 2000. As a result of these shortfalls, under the direction of its former superintendent, the district developed mission and vision statements and established district priorities for realigning resources. As part of its restructuring, the school board adopted district staffing ratios that lowered the number of students per teacher. To meet the required staffing ratios without increases in funding, several schools in the district eliminated teaching positions in art, music, and physical education. Budget cutbacks and the elimination of teachers in the arts and physical education are perceived by some to have tightened the freedom schools had with their budgets. In addition, some teachers, in particular, are frustrated because they believe schools in Sarasota do not have enough money to make the improvements the state wants.

Second, while district administrators envision their role as supporting schools and allowing them to move at their own pace towards more measurable improvement objectives, we found that some schools may need additional direction, especially in the area of evaluation. For example, in an attempt to demonstrate they are making improvements, teachers at one school spend a considerable amount of time keeping track of each strategy in their plan, rather than measuring outcomes. They complain of being exhausted and frustrated with the amount of time they spend in these activities to prove to the state they are improving. While teachers at the school indicate they have received several sets of instructions on how to evaluate their school improvement objectives, they are still unclear on how they should evaluate their school improvement activities. In 1995, the school district made changes that may improve the direction schools are provided. For example an additional staff member will be involved working directly with schools in developing their school improvement plans. In the past, one staff member was primarily responsible for working with all schools in the district. These changes will enable one staff member to assist elementary and middle schools and another to assist secondary schools.

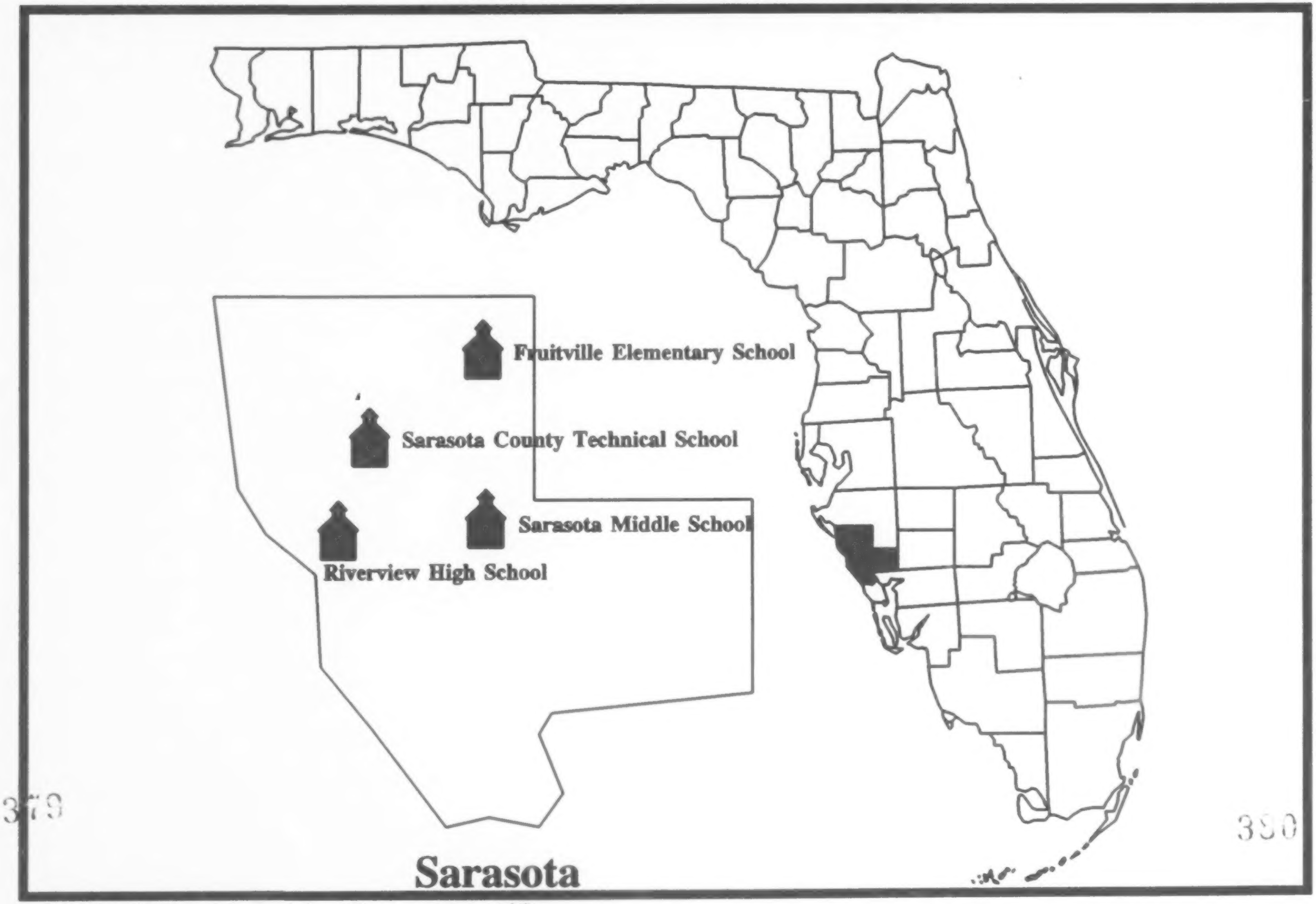
District and School Demographics

375 Sarasota County School District is the 18th largest school district in the state with 30,431 prekindergarten through 12th 376
grade students and 36 schools. Based on the latest information available from the Department of Education, approximately 84% of

students are white, 11% are African American, and 4% are Hispanic compared to state averages of 59%, 25%, and 15%, respectively. One indicator often used to measure the poverty rate of a school district is the percentage of students eligible to receive free or reduced lunches. In 1994, the average percentage of students eligible to receive free or reduced lunches in Sarasota County schools was 21%. The median percentage of students eligible to receive free or reduced lunch in the state in 1994 was 43%. In 1994, the mobility rates in Sarasota County (i.e., percentage of students who transferred into or out of the school during the school year) were 26% for elementary schools 23% for middle schools, and 23% for high schools. The 1994 state median mobility rates were 36% for elementary schools, 31% for middle schools, and 33% for high schools. In addition, 4,179 kindergarten through 12th grade students attended non-public schools in Sarasota County in 1994-95.

We visited four public schools in Sarasota County: one elementary school, one middle school, one high school, and one vocational-technical center. Sarasota County Technical Institute is the largest school we visited with 5,086 students and Fruitville Elementary School is the smallest school with 708 students. We also visited Sarasota Middle School with 1,383 students and Riverview High School with 2,150 students. See Exhibit 12 for demographic information on the students attending each school we visited. See Exhibit 13 for student performance data for each school.

Exhibit 11
Location of Schools Visited in Sarasota County


Fruitville Elementary School
Sarasota County Technical School
Sarasota Middle School
Riverview High School
Sarasota

Source: Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability.

Exhibit 12

	1995 Student Information						
School	Number of Students	Percent Eligible to Receive Free/Reduced Lunch	White	African American	Hispanic	Other	Mobility Rate of Students
Fruitville Elementary	708	41%	86%	11%	3%	1%	34%
Sarasota Middle	1,383	19%	97%	1%	1%	1%	19%
Riverview High	2,150	15%	89%	8%	2%	1%	24%
Sarasota County Technical Institute*	5,086	N/A	91%	5%	3%	1%	N/A

Note: Information for free/reduced lunches and mobility rates is based on 1994-95 school year data. * Number of students represents full time equivalents (FTEs).

Source: Based on information provided by the Department of Education and individual schools.

Exhibit 13

	Student Performance Data					
School	94 NRT Reading or HSCT Communication Scores	95 NRT Reading or HSCT Communication Scores	94 NRT or HSCT Mathematics Scores	95 NRT or HSCT Mathematics Scores	94 Florida Writing Scores	95 Florida Writing Scores
Fruitville Elementary	64%	60%	49%	61%	14%	31%
Sarasota Middle	70%	67%	63%	61%	48%	54%
Riverview High	88%	94%	84%	88%	71%	88%

Note: For reading and mathematics in elementary and middle schools, data reflects percentage of students' scores above the 50th national percentile on Reading Comprehension and Mathematics Concepts/Applications subtests on national referenced tests (NRT). Data for high schools consists of passing scores on the Communications and Mathematics sections of the High School Competency Test (HSCT) for first time test takers during the fall administration. Writing scores reflect the percentage of students scoring "3" and above on a scale of 0 to 6 on the Florida Writes assessment. This table includes student performance data for elementary, middle, and high schools visited

Source: Based on information provided by the Department of Education.

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School Board and District Administration

The Sarasota County School Board and district administrators are involved in assisting county schools in their efforts to improve. School board members directed all schools in the district to include Blueprint 2000 goal 3, student performance, in their school improvement plans. Schools, however, may include additional goals based on their needs assessments. The Sarasota County School Board also adopted a policy requiring that at least half of a school's advisory council members be employed outside the school. While school board members report that they generally read school improvement plans, their reviews vary depending on the particular board member. For example, one board member we spoke to reviews plans so that she is generally familiar with their contents. She does not think it is appropriate to tell a school to change its plan after it receives buy-in from stakeholders. Another school board member reviews plans to make sure they are based on school needs and include definitions of adequate progress and clearly defined objectives.

District administrators in Sarasota County manage the school improvement process on a daily basis. Administrators we spoke to view their role as supporting schools and allowing them to move at their own pace towards more measurable school improvement objectives. One staff member believes that if systematic change goes too fast, there will be a backlash. District staff members report that they keep track of the focus of school improvement efforts, but do not judge what schools are doing or require schools to follow a particular format in developing plans. In reviewing school improvement plans, district staff report they make sure plans are based on a needs assessment and include elements required by state law, such as definitions of adequate progress. As part of their review, administrators also make sure that plans are generally consistent with district initiatives such as team teaching and inclusion of special needs students in classrooms with other students. While two staff members are primarily responsible for working with schools, one staff person assists elementary and middle schools and the other assists secondary schools. For example, one of the staff members meets with the secondary principals twice monthly. One of these meetings each month is devoted exclusively to discussing school improvement objectives and strategies, such as curriculum and scheduling changes. District administrators indicate that schools initially concentrated on implementation of projects and strategies and are evolving towards assessment of their efforts.

They also believe schools in Sarasota County are making improvements in student performance even though some schools may not be able to provide hard evidence documenting these improvements. According to district staff, the district is still grappling with the concepts of adequate progress and evaluation, thus the improvement objectives of some schools are still less measurable than those of other schools.

It should be noted that some school board members are concerned about school improvement in Sarasota. For example, school board members indicate they need more communication with district administrators, especially feedback concerning their reviews of school improvement plans. Furthermore, one school board member believes that the objectives in the school improvement plans are not clearly defined and sufficiently measurable. This member feels that schools in the district are too focused on implementing their plans rather than focusing on student impact. Another school board member believes that it is time for schools to show how they will make improvements in the areas of student performance.

School Improvement Process

School Advisory Councils. 1994-95 school advisory councils (SACs) in Sarasota County range in size from 11 to 15 members. Meetings are held on Monday evening or Tuesday afternoon, once a month. All SACs include administrators, teachers, and students. All SACs (except the one for the vocational-technical center) have parent representatives. Two of the schools have little or no representation by the business community. Only one school kept attendance records for the 1994-95 school year. However, records will be kept in the 1995-96 school year at the other three schools we visited. All members (except for business and community representatives) attend meetings regularly. Turnover is considered to be somewhat of a problem for implementation of school improvement at one school where parents and business representatives could not commit the time required. At other schools, turnover is not considered to be a problem.

Perceptions on the School Improvement Process. Stakeholders (district administrators, school board members, principals, teachers, and SAC members) indicate that one of the most positive contributions of Blueprint 2000 is that it provides a mechanism for change and focus. For example, Blueprint 2000 is perceived as providing a common direction, encouraging self-examination, and providing a framework for school improvement initiatives. In addition, stakeholders believe that Blueprint 2000 increases the involvement and awareness of both community members and school staff. Teachers, SAC members, and principals cite few negative impacts associated with Blueprint 2000. However, they mention that Blueprint 2000 creates an increased workload primarily due to documentation of school improvement status and the increased pressure they feel because schools are being held accountable for demonstrating that they are making adequate progress towards their goals.

Stakeholders identified several factors that they believe help schools make improvements. At all schools, stakeholders identified the involvement and support of community members, school staff, and SAC members as a factor that helps them make improvements. Other factors include the support and leadership provided by the school district and school administrators; additional flexibility received when provisions of state or local statutes, rules and policies were waived; training, especially in technology; and increased funding and flexibility provided to schools to make decisions and to allocate resources as necessary.

Stakeholders identified several factors as hindering school improvement efforts of the schools we visited. There is a strong, common belief that lack of funds and funding cutbacks impede a school's efforts to improve. In 1994-95, the school board adopted a district staffing policy to reduce teacher to student ratios. The school board told school administrators to shift resources to meet the new district policy. Some schools, especially those with relatively small budgets and fewer teachers, eliminated art, music, and physical education classes and staff positions. The elimination of these positions is often mentioned as a barrier to school efforts to improve the education of students in Sarasota County. Other factors include lack of time, particularly to keep track of the implementation of numerous improvement strategies being implemented simultaneously and to receive additional training needed to make improvements. There is resistance among some teachers at the schools we visited who believe that either Blueprint 2000 does not apply to their school or that their schools do not need to improve. Some instructors at the vocational-technical center believe that

Blueprint 2000 applies more to schools with kindergarten through 12th grade students than to vocational-technical centers whose main mission is to prepare students for the work force.

School Improvement Plans

Goals, Objectives, Strategies. Although the 1994-95 school improvement plans of the four schools we visited all include Blueprint 2000 Goal 3 Student Performance, Fruitville Elementary School and Sarasota County Technical Institute include additional state education goals as part of their plans. For example, Fruitville Elementary School also plans to improve school safety and adult literacy (Blueprint 2000 goals 5 and 7) while Sarasota County Technical Institute includes Blueprint 2000 goals 2 and 6, graduation rate and readiness for postsecondary education and employment and teachers and staff in their 1994-95 school improvement plan. The schools we visited most often specifically concentrate on improved reading, writing, and math skills and increased problem solving and critical thinking skills in their school improvement plans. Other specific objectives in the plans vary but include improved school safety, improved career preparedness, and reduced number of disciplinary actions. The following improvement strategies are described in two or more plans:

- New or modified curriculum;
- Parental/community involvement activities; publications/information dissemination;
- Teacher/staff training;
- Hire additional staff; and
- Planning, exploring, and assessing activities.

Trends in School Improvement Plans. To review trends across school improvement plans, we reviewed school improvement plans from 1993-94 through 1995-96. Each school's 1995-96 plan includes a definition of adequate progress as required by 6A-1099.81, F.A.C. One school's plans include adequate progress definitions in both 1994-95 and 1995-96. In addition, the plans we reviewed generally contain evaluation methods. However, the evaluation methods in the plans are generally vague or unclear regarding how the school intends to determine if the objectives are achieved. For example, often the evaluation methods include the completion of activities rather than a measurement of the desired outcome. In terms of goal areas addressed, two of the schools continue to focus solely on student performance, while one school expands its focus to more goal areas, and another narrows its focus to fewer goal areas.

Impact of Blueprint 2000

Students. Stakeholders (district administrators, school board members, principals, teachers, and SAC members) believe that schools are implementing many school improvement initiatives that are generally consistent with Blueprint 2000 goals and strategies. At the four schools we visited the most frequently cited improvements related to improving student performance are in various academic areas such as reading, writing, and math. Other improvements identified at two or more schools include increased computer competency skills of students; improved student responsibility, cooperativeness, maturity, adjustment and social skills; and improved school safety. While schools provided documentary evidence resulting from systematic evaluations to illustrate some of the improvements, in most cases, teacher observation is the primary indicator used to illustrate improvements. While some of the improvement initiatives are in the process of being implemented and it may be too early to measure their full impact, in some cases schools have not yet developed systematic methods of evaluating the impact of their efforts.

Teachers. Faculty members are involved in the school improvement process at the four schools we visited. Teachers have different levels of involvement depending on whether they are members of the SAC, members of committees that work on school improvement areas, or implementing strategies in their classrooms. Teachers at the four schools we visited generally do not believe that the time and efforts they spend planning and implementing school improvement activities have taken too much time from teaching activities. Teachers indicate that school improvement activities are usually held after school so no time is taken away from teaching students. According to teachers at these schools, in the past, the district had early release days when students were sent home early so that teachers could be involved in school improvement activities such as team meetings, training, or planning activities. However, due to budgetary restraints, during the 1995-96 school year the district has no early release days scheduled. Teachers at one of the four schools we visited in Sarasota County are angry and frustrated about the amount of time they spend keeping track of the implementation of their school improvement plan. They believe that the state is holding them accountable for implementing all the strategies they include in their plan so they spend considerable time and effort documenting that each of the strategies is implemented. For example, teachers track numerous strategies such as who receives training called for in their school improvement plan and when it is received. The teachers at this school are all members of the school management team that works closely with the school advisory council in developing and implementing their school's improvement plan. They said that they have received several sets of instructions on how to evaluate their school improvement objectives since Blueprint 2000 was first introduced, but these guidelines are unclear.

School Administration. Blueprint 2000 is not perceived as having a significant impact on how resources are allocated to schools by the school board or how schools in Sarasota County allocate their resources. However, several points should be made to understand the impact of Blueprint 2000 on school administration. First, the Sarasota County School Board adopted a shared decision-making model prior to Blueprint 2000. Under this model, school management teams comprised of faculty and staff work with the school administration in allocating resources. School administrators indicate that under shared decision-making schools have the flexibility to shift resources. For example, one administrator reports that she was able to use funds allocated for a home liaison position to hire a behavioral specialist. Another administrator states that even though Blueprint 2000 has not had a significant impact on how resources are allocated, it helps the school to direct resources to needs identified in their school improvement plan. Second, it is perceived by many that budget cuts over the past few years make budget flexibility more difficult. For example, one administrator reports that the school's budget was cut by 8% in 1994-95, which amounted to $500,000. In 1994-95, the school board adopted a district staffing policy to reduce teacher to pupil ratios that caused some schools to eliminate art, music, and physical education classes and staff positions. Budget cuts and changes to the district staffing ratio appear to impact how teachers, in particular, view resource allocation, Blueprint 2000, and school improvement in general.

Highlights of School Improvement Initiatives. The four schools we visited in Sarasota County are implementing various projects to improve. This section provides brief highlights of a few of these improvements:

- **Blueprint 200 Goals 2 and 3, Graduation Rate and Readiness for Postsecondary Education and Employment and Student Performance: Improved Employment and Employability Skills**. Sarasota County Technical Institute (SCTI) created a program to ensure the approximately 300 students who attend with special needs (such as the handicapped) are provided services they require to complete their chosen technical programs and are employed. The Special Needs Program, based on models from Leon County (Florida) and the University of Wisconsin, is designed to provide career counseling and individual educational counseling, accommodations for testing, instructional modifications for technical programs, tutoring, identification of adaptive equipment, and cooperation with community agencies for transition for employment. In addition to providing support services, the SCTI has focused its efforts on modifying its buildings to accommodate students with special needs. As of September 1995, 49 adult students and 70 high school students were enrolled in the Special Needs Program with 35 additional students pending enrollment; approximately 250 students have been served since 1993. The program coordinator conducted surveys of students who received special needs support services. The survey indicates that students rated the quality of services received as "very good." The coordinator indicates that without the program, many special students would not have attended SCTI. SCTI is presently developing methods and collecting baseline data to better evaluate the overall success of the program.

- **Blueprint 2000 Goal 3, Student Performance: Improved Student Performance and Discipline**. The SPECTRUM Program was created at Fruitville Elementary School to teach students how to learn, get along and work cooperatively, make good decisions, and become active learners. Students ages 5-12 may participate in the SPECTRUM Program upon parental request; as of September 1995, approximately 120 of 700 children attending the school were enrolled in SPECTRUM. Children of differing ages and abilities either work alone or in groups of two or more to complete classroom activities. The concept is that younger students will learn from older ones and older students will reinforce their own skills by helping younger ones. Teachers act as facilitators. The program uses assessment of work in progress and samples of student work to determine the progress of students. The program uses an alternative, six level report card that evaluates children on citizenship, study habits/effort, mathematics, social studies, science, writing, and reading and includes a student self-evaluation. Each level includes expected performance measures. However, more evaluation is needed to determine if differences on national achievement tests in reading, language, and mathematics are statistically significant and are not attributable to the characteristics of students participating in the program. In addition, SPECTRUM student discipline referrals to the principal's office are lower than those for all students at the school. Teachers indicate that they have also observed improvements in self-esteem, confidence, cooperativeness, and responsibility.

- **Blueprint 2000 Goals 3 and 4, Student Performance and Learning Environment: Increased Academic Performance**. The Renaissance Program, created by Jostens Corporation and used in over 7,000 schools in America, was initiated at

Riverview High School in 1994. The initiative is designed to improve academic motivation and performance via a program of recognition/incentives provided through business/community partnerships to students who are academic achievers. As part of Renaissance, students earn gold, silver, or white T-shirts and I.D. cards, depending on their GPA. This program entitles these students to merchant discounts, free parking, and other incentives/bonuses. Comparing student grade point averages for similar quarters for 1993-94 and 1994-95, there has been at least a 5% increase in the number of students receiving a 3.0 - 4.0 G.P.A. each quarter since the Renaissance Program began.

- **Blueprint 2000 Goal 3, Student Performance:** **Improved Student Performance**. Multi-Age grouping, initially piloted for the 1993-94 school year, is offered as a choice to students and parents at Sarasota Middle School. Under multi-age grouping, students of various ages and grade levels (6th, 7th, and 8th grades) are placed in the same classroom and work together on projects and assignments. School administrators state that due to factors such as the success of the Multi-Age pilot program, student interest, and demand by Sarasota Middle School parents, two additional Multi-Age teams were implemented for the 1995-96 school year. One of the purposes of the initiative is to provide a continuous progress system in which students are not restricted by grade levels. Students from the 6th, 7th, and 8th grade classes are grouped together for instructional activities. By implementing multi-age teams, Sarasota Middle School hoped to focus on the various developmental areas and challenges of the middle school age child. Those we interviewed indicate that students in the program have benefitted in areas such as improved attendance, improved social skills, improved discipline, and improved test scores. Sarasota Middle School has collected and evaluated data in regard to Multi-Age Team students. Attendance data from a random sample of Multi-Age students was compared with data from a random sample of students on single grade teams. The data indicates that a sample of team students missed less than 50% of the school days missed by single-grade team students during the 1993-94 and 1994-95 school years. Although overall student standardized test scores improved and discipline referrals decreased, teachers indicate that it is difficult to attribute academic or social growth directly to the program. Teachers observe that students' social skills and general behavior are improving.

School Profiles

The following school profiles contain specific information about the implementation and impact of Blueprint 2000 at each of the schools we visited in Sarasota County School District. Each school profile provides information on school advisory councils, school improvements cited by stakeholder groups, school improvement plans, and stakeholder perceptions on Blueprint 2000.

Sarasota County School District

School Profiles

Fruitville Elementary School

Sarasota Middle School

Riverview High School

Sarasota County Technical Institute

FRUITVILLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROFILE

SCHOOL DESCRIPTION	
SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS, AS IDENTIFIED BY STAKEHOLDERS	Stakeholders identified certain school characteristics which should be considered in examining improvement initiatives at the school. These characteristics include: ■ Fruitville has had three new principal over the past three years; ■ About 2/3 of the students at Fruitville live in neighborhoods surrounding the school. Families in these neighborhoods generally earn middle-class to upper middle-class incomes. Many of the children's parents and grandparents attended the school; ■ About 1/3 of the students are bused. These students are primarily from lower income, African-American families. The school liaison visits parents of these children to get them more involved in school activities; and ■ The school has a number of students from migrant families and families employed by the circus. These children enroll at the beginning of the year but generally stop attending school about March to join their families. This may contribute to Fruitville's high mobility rate of 34%.
NUMBER OF STUDENTS AND TEACHERS IN 1995	■ 708 students ■ 40 teachers

FRUITVILLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROFILE

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS	
NAME OF GROUP FUNCTIONING AS SAC	School Advisory Council (SAC)
MEMBERSHIP COMPOSITION OF 1994-95 SAC ACCORDING TO MEMBERSHIP LIST PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL (N = 11)	Administrators: 1 Teachers: 3 Support Staff: 1 Parents: 4 Business/Community: 1 Students: 1
SAC MEETINGS	SAC meetings were held on Tuesday afternoon at 3:00 p.m. The SAC met approximately once per month.
SAC MEMBER ATTENDANCE	Records of members attending SAC meetings were not kept during the 1994-95 school year. However, according to the principal, SAC attendance will be recorded for meetings held during the 1995-96 school year.
NEW SAC MEMBERS IN 1995	Compared to the 1994-95 SAC, 5 of 10 members of the 1995-96 SAC had not previously served on the school's advisory council. There was a difference of opinion on the impact of turnover on the SAC's ability to develop and implement the school improvement plan. One administrator indicated that it was particularly difficult to keep parent and business community members on the SAC. Several reasons were cited for members leaving prior to their terms expiring or not returning the next year including: parents may leave because their children are promoted and leave the school; families move out of the school's attendance zone; the issues, such as sports or safety, that the member wanted addressed are addressed and the person leaves; personal reasons, such as child care needs; and some members are overwhelmed with the complexity of educational issues and feel that educators are the "experts."
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FRUITVILLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROFILE

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS	
INVOLVEMENT OF SCHOOL STAFF	Faculty members are involved in the school improvement process through their membership on several school faculty committees. The school has a participatory management team (PMT) consisting of approximately 10 elected instructional and non-instructional staff members. The PMT discusses and makes decisions on school issues relating to instruction, technology, and facilities, all which impact school improvement. Lead teachers also meet and discuss instructional issues. The PMT provides input on the school improvement plan to the SAC and approves the final plan.

FRUITVILLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROFILE

PERCEPTIONS ON SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS	
MOST POSITIVE CONTRIBUTIONS OF BLUEPRINT 2000	■ Provides a mechanism for change and a mandate to do things differently; ■ Increased involvement; and ■ Increased communication among teachers.
NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF BLUEPRINT 2000	■ Burdensome in time and paperwork requirements.
FACTORS THAT HAVE HELPED THE SCHOOL IMPROVE	■ Parental support - parents want to see Fruitville Elementary improve; ■ Principal helped by giving teachers time to develop the school improvement plan, encouraging new ideas, and believing in the concept of Blueprint 2000; ■ Teacher training, especially in technology and writing; ■ District administration encouraging schools to come up with new ideas, accepting them, and providing needed waivers to school board policies; ■ Monetary grants for writing projects; and ■ Seeing the success of the programs helps to encourage teachers to continue their school improvement efforts.
FACTORS THAT HAVE HINDERED SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT	■ Some teachers at the school do not believe the school needs to improve and are still resistent to Blueprint 2000; ■ Budget cuts and lack of funding in Sarasota County have created an atmosphere of pessimism and frustration toward Blueprint 2000 and school improvement in general; ■ Time requirements of Blueprint 2000, particularly to cover everything at SAC meetings that needed to be covered; and ■ State requirements regarding the classification and testing of students by grade level made it difficult for the school to implement its multi-age classroom program which combines students from several different grade levels into one classroom.

FRUITVILLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROFILE

1994-95 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	
STATE GOALS INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	■ Goal 3 (Student Performance); ■ Goal 5 (School Safety); and ■ Goal 7 (Adult Literacy).
OBJECTIVES INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	The 1994-95 school improvement plan included three specific improvement objectives in the following general areas: ■ Improve reading, writing, and math skills; ■ Improve school safety; and ■ Improve adult literacy.
STRATEGIES INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	The 1994-95 school improvement plan included ten improvement strategies or activities in the following general categories: ■ Parental/community involvement activities; publications/information dissemination; ■ Develop/institute cross-grade articulation programs; ■ New/modified curriculum; ■ Teacher/staff training; ■ Improve physical facilities; ■ Purchase/use applied software; and ■ Planning, exploring, assessing activities.
ADEQUATE PROGRESS AND EVALUATION	The 1994-95 school improvement plan includes evaluation procedures but does not include a definition of adequate progress.
TRENDS IN PLANS	The school expanded the focus of its school improvement plans into more goal areas over the last three years and included more strategies and objectives to achieve these goals. Specifically, the 1994-95 plan addressed three of the seven Blueprint 2000 state goals and the 1995-96 plan addresses five of the seven state goals: readiness to start school, student performance, school safety and environment, teachers and staff, and adult literacy. The school began including a definition of adequate progress and continued to include evaluation procedures in its 1995-96 plan.

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FRUITVILLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROFILE

IMPACT OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES ON SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION	
WAIVERS	The school has received two waivers to implement the SPECTRUM Program (See description under "Impact of School Improvement Initiatives on Students") from the Sarasota County School Board: one for alternate report cards and one for curriculum requirements.
RESOURCE ALLOCATION	Under Blueprint 2000, the school board allocates resources to Fruitville Elementary School much the same as in the past. It was perceived that school administrators have always had the flexibility to use resources as needed. However, schools were given additional flexibility during 1995-96 to use funds allocated for a home liaison position to hire a behavioral specialist. In 1994-95, the school board adopted a district staffing policy of 24 students: 1 teacher. The school board told school administrators to shift resources to meet the new district policy. Schools with relatively small budgets and fewer teachers, such as Fruitville Elementary, eliminated art, music, and physical education classes and staff positions. Thus, some teachers perceived that the school board forced schools to cut art, music, and physical education classes.
ADDITIONAL FUNDS	The school has received several grants ranging from $3,000 - $5,000 to help implement writing projects. Sources include the Selby Corporation and other educational foundations. In 1995-96, the school received a $1,100 Creative Classroom Grant from the Selby Corporation, which the school must match equally, and several Edge of Excellence minigrants of up to $500 each.
DECISION-MAKING	Under Blueprint 2000, it was perceived that decisions are made basically the same as in the past. However, school administrators pointed out that the input of teachers, SAC members, and the community is (and was prior to Blueprint 2000) considered when making decisions.

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FRUITVILLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROFILE

EXAMPLES OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES

School Improvement Cited	Examples of Initiatives	Description and Impact of Initiatives	Relationship to BP 2000 Goals
Improved Student Performance Improved Discipline	SPECTRUM Multi-Age Program	The SPECTRUM Program was created by teachers at Fruitville Elementary School to teach students how to learn, get along and work cooperatively, make good decisions, and become active learners. Students ages 5-12 may participate in the SPECTRUM Program upon parental request; as of September 1995, approximately 120 children were enrolled in SPECTRUM. Children of differing ages and abilities either work alone or in groups of two or more to complete classroom activities. The concept is that younger students will learn from older ones and older students will reinforce their own skills by helping younger ones. Teachers act as facilitators. No textbooks are used. The program uses assessment of work in progress and samples of student work to determine the progress of students. The program uses an alternative, six level report card that evaluates children on citizenship, study habits/effort, mathematics, social studies, science, writing, and reading and includes a student self-evaluation. Each level includes expected performance measures. Data comparing scores of students on the American College Testing Comprehensive Assessment Testing Program National Achievement Test shows that students participating in the SPECTRUM Program are performing better than all students at the school in terms of the basic battery of reading, language, and mathematics. However, more evaluation is needed to determine if differences are statistically significant and are not attributable to the characteristics of students participating in the program. In addition, SPECTRUM student discipline referrals to the principal's office are lower than those for all students at the school. Teachers indicated that they have also observed improvements in self-esteem, confidence, cooperativeness, and responsibility.	Goal 3

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School Improvement Cited	Examples of Initiatives	Description and Impact of Initiatives	Relationship to BP 2000 Goals
Improved Writing Skills	Various Writing Strategies	In the 1994-95 school year, the school placed a greater emphasis on improving the writing skills of students. Fruitville implemented several strategies such as including regular writing activities into the curriculum and integrating writing across subject areas and in all grade levels. Writing activities included writing stories about real or imagined events, descriptions, letter writing, summaries, and requiring written and oral reports in various subjects. Administrators indicated that in 1994, prior to the implementation of these strategies, 14% of students scored 3 or better on the Florida Writes test. In 1995, 31% of students had scored 3 or above on the test, an increase of 17%.	Goal 3

SARASOTA MIDDLE SCHOOL PROFILE

SCHOOL DESCRIPTION	
SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS, AS IDENTIFIED BY STAKEHOLDERS	Stakeholders identified certain school characteristics which should be considered when examining improvement initiatives at the school. These characteristics include: ■ Sarasota Middle School was built 3 years ago and has a student population comprised of diverse socioeconomic groups. Conflicts sometimes arise because of peer pressure; ■ When the school moved to its new location several years ago, it began serving an almost entirely new population, i.e., reduction in minority and lower socioeconomic representation; ■ Technically, 100% of the students are bused because of the school's location on an "unsafe" road. The school has three bus routes; ■ Staff reductions due to district reorganization prior to the 1995-96 school year (e.g., loss of Art, Music, and Physical Education instructors); and ■ Generally, parents are affluent, involved in school activities, and aware of trends in education.
NUMBER OF STUDENTS AND TEACHERS IN 1995	■ 1,383 students ■ 80 teachers

SARASOTA MIDDLE SCHOOL PROFILE

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS

NAME OF GROUP FUNCTIONING AS SAC	School Advisory Council (SAC)
MEMBERSHIP COMPOSITION OF 1994-95 SAC ACCORDING TO MEMBERSHIP LIST PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL (N = 15)	Administrators: 2 Teachers: 4 Support Staff: 1 Parents: 4 Business/Community: 2 Students: 2
SAC MEETINGS	SAC meetings were held Monday evening at 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. The SAC met twice a month during the 1994-95 school year.
SAC MEMBER ATTENDANCE	No formal attendance records were maintained for the 1994-95 school year but, according to the principal, will be kept in the future. However, according to the SAC chair, about 9 of 16 members generally attended. Four of the five teachers generally attended. Business and community members did not generally attend on a regular basis because of conflicts with other commitments.
NEW SAC MEMBERS IN 1995	Compared to the 1994-95 SAC, 8 of 14 members of the 1995-96 SAC had not previously served on the school's advisory council. According to the principal, high turnover of SAC members reflects changing administrators and an increase in the number of parents on the SAC. Turnover was not perceived as affecting the SAC's ability to develop and implement the school improvement plan. Reasons for SAC members leaving the SAC prior to their terms expiring or not returning the next year included: ■ Students graduated from the school; ■ Loss of interest; and ■ Conflict with other commitments.

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SARASOTA MIDDLE SCHOOL PROFILE

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS	
INVOLVEMENT OF SCHOOL STAFF	Teachers and other staff members are involved in the development of the school improvement plan. At least one-third of the teachers who are not serving as SAC members serve on school improvement goal area subcommittees (e.g., positive school climate committee). Team leaders obtain input regarding improvement efforts from all faculty members and share this information with the appropriate subcommittee designated to address specific school needs.

SARASOTA MIDDLE SCHOOL PROFILE

PERCEPTIONS ON SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS	
MOST POSITIVE CONTRIBUTIONS OF BLUEPRINT 2000	■ Helps create a climate more receptive to change; ■ Keeps the school in line with the national school reform effort; ■ Assists the school in setting high but realistic goals; and ■ Provides a framework and focus for school improvement initiatives.
NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF BLUEPRINT 2000	■ Accountability and adequate progress requirements place additional pressure on administrators and teachers when coupled with other daily professional responsibilities; ■ Public confusion has developed about what is actually going on in terms of Blueprint 2000; and ■ Schools are struggling with understanding the assessment aspect of Blueprint 2000.
FACTORS THAT HAVE HELPED THE SCHOOL IMPROVE	■ Strong leadership from district office staff; ■ Commitment of the entire district to school improvement; ■ District's methods of collecting and analyzing data to determine school's needs; ■ Increased involvement of stakeholders in the decision-making process; ■ Some additional funds provided through Technology Incentive Grants; ■ District waiver allowing flexibility in grading; ■ Provision of training; and ■ Willingness of teachers to work together and take risks.

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SARASOTA MIDDLE SCHOOL PROFILE

PERCEPTIONS ON SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS	
FACTORS THAT HAVE HINDERED SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT	■ Lack of financial and human resources to fully implement desired improvement initiatives; ■ Lack of release time for teacher training; ■ Lack of flexibility in middle school certification requirements to allow teachers knowledgeable in several subject areas to teach out-of-field (e.g., teacher certified in math cannot teach science); and ■ Disruption in school's staffing, due to district's 1995-96 budget cuts (e.g., loss of teachers in chorus, art, strings, Physical Education, and counseling).

SARASOTA MIDDLE SCHOOL PROFILE

1994-95 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	
STATE GOALS INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	■ Goal 3 (Student Performance).
EXAMPLES OF CATEGORIES OF OBJECTIVES INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	The 1994-95 school improvement plan included three specific improvement objectives in the following general area: ■ Improve problem solving and critical thinking skills.
EXAMPLES OF CATEGORIES OF STRATEGIES INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	The 1994-95 school improvement plan included eight improvement strategies or activities in the following general categories: ■ Implementation of specific academic projects; pilot projects; ■ Teacher/staff training; ■ Establish committees, study groups, planning groups; planning, exploring, and assessing activities; and ■ Publications/information dissemination; provide training and/or material to parents.
ADEQUATE PROGRESS AND EVALUATION	The 1994-95 SIP did not include a definition of adequate progress but did include methods for evaluation.
TRENDS IN PLANS	In its school improvement plans the school focused on student performance (Goal 3) during all three years. The school increased the number of objectives it addressed from 3 to 5 and increased the strategies implemented from 10 to 15 in the 1995-96 SIP. Four of the new strategies were in the area of new or modified curriculum. In 1995-96 the school began including a definition of adequate progress in its SIP and continued to include evaluation methods.

SARASOTA MIDDLE SCHOOL PROFILE

IMPACT OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES ON SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION	
WAIVERS	The school received a district waiver allowing flexibility in grading for the 1995-96 school year. Instead of letter grades, the school was allowed to use comments describing performance in Physical Education, (e.g., Outstanding, Needs Improvement). The shared decision-making team believed this method of grading would be fairer to the students who have been participating in the PE program on a part-time basis since district budgetary cuts resulted in the loss of a PE faculty position.
RESOURCE ALLOCATION	The principal perceives the school had a degree of flexibility in resource allocation prior to Blueprint 2000 because of the district's involvement in site-based decision making. The principal refers to the school improvement plan when making resource allocation decisions. Resources are allocated according to student performance needs. For example, the school made efforts to ensure that necessary resources were provided to support the multi-age teaming concept, and funds were allocated to send staff to the Multi-age Conference in Atlanta for training.
FUNDS	Sarasota Middle School has received additional funds to support their improvement initiatives through several sources. The school received $30,000 in D.O.E. Technology Incentive Grants for each of the 1994-95 and 1995-96 school years to support their technological improvements. Teachers may also apply for individual grants for creative classroom improvement projects through two programs sponsored by the Selby Foundation, a locally-funded endowment for community and educational needs. For the 1995-96 school year, 15 teachers received a total of approximately $4,000 in Selby Grants. Two teachers received a total of $2,000 through the Edge of Excellence Grant Program. The school also received $4,600 in Title VI Grant money for 1994-96.

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SARASOTA MIDDLE SCHOOL PROFILE

IMPACT OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES ON SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION	
DECISION-MAKING	Sarasota schools and staff have been involved in site-based decision making since the mid-1980s. The principal perceives that since Blueprint 2000 began, parents and business/community members have been much more involved in decisions affecting school improvement efforts. For example, through school effectiveness surveys, parents have an opportunity to provide input about the type of school they want Sarasota Middle School to be and the services it should provide for their children. This information is useful in assessing the school's needs and in prioritizing improvement initiatives.

SARASOTA MIDDLE SCHOOL PROFILE

IMPACT OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES ON STUDENTS

School Improvement Cited	Examples of Initiatives	Description and Impact of Initiatives	Relationship to BP 2000 Goals
Improved Student Performance	Multi-Age Teaming	Multi-Age grouping, initially piloted for the 1993-94 school year, is offered as a choice to students and parents at Sarasota Middle School. Under multi-age grouping, students of various ages and grade levels (6th, 7th, and 8th grades) are placed in the same classroom and work together on projects and assignments. School administrators stated that due to factors such as the success of the Multi-Age pilot program, student interest, and demand by Sarasota Middle School parents, two additional Multi-Age teams were implemented for the 1995-96 school year. One of the purposes of the initiative is to provide a continuous progress system in which students are not restricted by grade levels. Students from the 6th, 7th, and 8th grade classes are grouped together for instructional activities. By implementing a multi-age team, Sarasota Middle School hoped to focus on the various developmental areas and challenges of the middle school age child. Those we interviewed indicate that students in the program have benefitted in areas such as improved attendance, improved social skills, improved discipline, and improved test scores. Sarasota Middle School has collected and evaluated data in regard to Multi-Age Team students. Attendance data from a random sample of Multi-Age students was compared with data from a random sample of students on single-grade teams. The data indicated that a sample of team students missed less than 50% of the school days missed by single-grade team students during the 1993-94 and 1994-95 school years. Although overall student standardized test scores have improved and discipline referrals have decreased, teachers indicate that it is difficult to attribute academic or social growth directly to the program. Additional evaluation is needed to determine if increases in standardized test scores are attributable to the program. Teachers observe that students' social skills and general behavior are improving.	Goal 3 (continued)

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School Improvement Cited	Examples of Initiatives	Description and Impact of Initiatives	Relationship to BP 2000 Goals
Improved Technological Skills	Various Strategies including: ■ Computer Technology Plan; ■ Technology Inservice Training; and ■ Campus Broadcasting Network.	Sarasota Middle School's Technology Plan is designed to enhance student performance using interactive instructional strategies; to increase teachers' and students' involvement with computers; and to prepare students to be lifelong learners with respect to technology. Before the implementation of school improvement strategies, each academic team had, on the average, one computer. Sarasota Middle School now has over 500 computers, and the campus is fully networked. Most teachers have completed at least 30 hours of technology inservice training. The plan establishes a computer-driven, computer-assisted instructional framework providing "one-on-one" instruction for middle school students. Middle school students learn to create their own data base, transfer information, and work on numerous programs. The students also operate a television station in which students use computers and other technological equipment to write, produce, and broadcast programs to the student body. Students' and teachers' computer proficiency can be evaluated by directly observing them operate technological equipment. Students can be observed in projects such as drill and practice activities, experimenting with various types of software, using computers to write papers, and using CD roms, laser discs, and video cameras. Samples of students' work generated on the computer (e.g., reflective journals) and teachers' products (computer-generated progress reports) reflect improved technological skills. Staff indicate that since 1993, there has been a steady increase in the number of students who use technology at school and in the number of learning activities which involve technology. Although it is anticipated that these skills will better prepare students for lifelong learning experiences, it may be too early to measure the long-term benefits of the program.	Goal 3 (continued)

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School Improvement Cited	Examples of Initiatives	Description and Impact of Initiatives	Relationship to BP 2000 Goals
Improved School Climate	Various Strategies Including: ■ Early Bird Specials; ■ Peer Mediation Program; ■ Conflict Resolution Alternatives for Teens (CRAFT); and ■ Gold/Silver Card Program.	During the 1993-94 school year, Sarasota Middle School developed a positive reinforcement action plan which contains various strategies for improving the school's climate. Students have participated in a number of positive school climate activities. The Early Bird Specials is a before school activities program designed to accommodate working parents and to provide social enrichment experiences for students. The Peer Mediation Program is a preventative approach to conflict resolution. Conflict Resolution Alternatives for Teens (CRAFT) classes are designed to prevent physical confrontations on campus. The Gold/Silver card program for grade point average recognition is designed to improve student motivation and performance via a program of recognition/incentives provided through business/community partnerships. Teachers observe that students are working more closely together over a period of time. The school administered identical climate surveys to 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students and teachers in the spring of 1993 and again in the fall of 1994. The 1994 surveys indicate a higher number of positive responses in a number of critical school climate areas (e.g., students feel safe at school). An increase in the percentage of positive responses was demonstrated in all three grade levels as well as in the staff responses.	Goals 3, 4

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RIVERVIEW HIGH SCHOOL PROFILE

SCHOOL DESCRIPTION	
SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS, AS IDENTIFIED BY STAKEHOLDERS	Stakeholders identified certain school characteristics which should be considered when examining improvement initiatives at the school. These characteristics include: ■ Comprehensive High School offering a broad range of subjects in all academic areas and many enrichment opportunities (e.g., first nuclear radiation lab in a United States high school); ■ Primarily serves students from upper middle socioeconomic communities; ■ Most (65-70%) students are in college preparatory programs; ■ Serves almost all categories of ESE students; ■ Large number of senior staff members; ■ Strong business/community support; and ■ Going through period of transition in leadership.
NUMBER OF STUDENTS AND TEACHERS IN 1995	■ 2,150 students ■ 114 teachers

RIVERVIEW HIGH SCHOOL PROFILE

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS	
NAME OF GROUP FUNCTIONING AS SAC	School Advisory Council (SAC)
MEMBERSHIP COMPOSITION OF 1994-95 SAC ACCORDING TO MEMBERSHIP LIST PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL (N = 12)	Administrators: 2 Teachers: 1 Support Staff: 1 Parents: 3 Business/Community: 3 Students: 2
SAC MEETINGS	SAC meetings were held at 2:00 p.m. on the fourth Tuesday each month. The SAC met 10 times during the 1994-95 school year.
SAC MEMBER ATTENDANCE	Although attendance records were not kept on a regular basis, the SAC Chair stated that about 7 of the 12 members attended meetings on a regular basis. It has been difficult for business/community members to attend on a regular basis. According to the principal, the main conflict has not been due to the time of day meetings are held, but to the conflicts with other commitments. The principal also indicated attendance records will be kept for future meetings.
NEW SAC MEMBERS IN 1995	Compared to the 1994-95 SAC, 5 of 13 members of the 1995-96 SAC had not previously served on the SAC. Turnover has not been perceived to be as much of a problem as absenteeism and the ability to get a quorum at the meetings. Reasons for SAC members leaving the SAC prior to their terms expiring or not returning the next year included: ■ Conflict with other commitments; ■ Involvement in other activities; and ■ Difficulty of finding a convenient meeting time for everyone.

(continued)

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RIVERVIEW HIGH SCHOOL PROFILE

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS	
INVOLVEMENT OF SCHOOL STAFF	Teachers and other staff members participate in the development of the school improvement plan. According to the principal, levels of teacher involvement vary greatly. While some teachers spearhead school improvement committees or serve on SAC committees, others participate only in areas that directly impact their particular classroom. Teachers did not perceive that Blueprint 2000 has taken time away from teaching because they were involved in school improvement initiatives prior to the implementation of Blueprint 2000 and have always had to report on their progress. They do, however, spend a great deal of time after school working on various school improvement committees and task forces. The principal reported that this places an additional stress on teachers when combined with their other professional responsibilities.

Riverview High School Profile

Perceptions on School Improvement Process	
Most Positive Contributions of Blueprint 2000	■ Raises the awareness level of the entire community; and ■ Provides a common sense of direction and encourages self-examination.
Negative Impacts of Blueprint 2000	■ Lack of a systems approach in Blueprint 2000; ■ Lack of resources to support innovation; ■ Vagueness in the details related to the "how-to's" of school improvement; and ■ Appearance of treating all communities the same without regard to resources.
Factors that Have Helped the School Improve	■ Leadership of the principal; ■ Funding for staff development; ■ Release time for teacher training and inservice; ■ Site-based decision making; ■ Strong community support; ■ Staff involvement; and ■ Enhancement of what the school already had in place prior to Blueprint 2000, i.e., stakeholder participation and school advisory council.

(continued)

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RIVERVIEW HIGH SCHOOL PROFILE

PERCEPTIONS ON SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS	
FACTORS THAT HAVE HINDERED SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT	■ Lack of funding for school improvement initiatives (e.g., technology plan implementation); ■ Lack of time to receive training (e.g., technological skills); ■ General feeling that school has been doing a good job all along, before Blueprint 2000 efforts. Some faculty and parents are asking, " Why do we need to change?" ; ■ Vagueness in the details related to the "how-to's" of school improvement; ■ Lack of funding for school improvement initiatives; ■ Creation of additional stress for both teachers and administrators (e.g., for teachers, requirement of after-school time for involvement in school improvement efforts); ■ Perception of Blueprint 2000 as a "feel-good" proposal lacking in specifics; and ■ Responsibility of SAC to make decisions without real authority.

RIVERVIEW HIGH SCHOOL PROFILE

1994-95 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	
STATE GOALS INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	■ Goal 3 (Student Performance)
EXAMPLES OF CATEGORIES OF OBJECTIVES INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	The 1994-95 school improvement plan included ten specific improvement objectives in the following general areas: ■ Improve reading, writing, or math skills; ■ Improve academic skills of students other than reading, writing, or math; ■ Increase problem solving or critical thinking skills of students; ■ Increase student motivation, self-esteem; ■ Improve student responsibility, cooperativeness, maturity, adjustment, or social skills; and ■ Improve multicultural awareness, interaction, and cooperation.
EXAMPLES OF CATEGORIES OF STRATEGIES INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	The 1994-95 school improvement plan included 31 improvement strategies or activities in the following general categories: ■ New or modified curriculum; ■ Other non-academic program development; ■ Utilize integrated instruction approach/block scheduling; changes in the daily/yearly calendar/school schedule; ■ Develop incentives and/or academic recognition activities; peer counseling/peer groups; ■ Parental/community involvement activities; publications/information dissemination; ■ Fund raising/seeking activities; teacher/staff training; ■ Hire additional staff; and ■ Planning, exploring, and assessing activities.
	(continued)

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RIVERVIEW HIGH SCHOOL PROFILE

1994-95 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	
ADEQUATE PROGRESS AND EVALUATION	The 1994-95 school improvement plan does not include a description of adequate progress and includes evaluation methods for one of the ten objectives.
TRENDS IN PLANS	In its 1995-96 school improvement plan the school included a definition of adequate progress for the first time. In addition, it also began including methods to evaluate each of the objectives. The school continued to focus on one of the state goals, Goal 3 student performance, and the ten objectives included in its 1994-95 plan. The school is continuing to use the same 30 strategies to implement the plan, although many of the strategies have progressed from the planning to implementation stage.

RIVERVIEW HIGH SCHOOL PROFILE

IMPACT OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES ON SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION	
WAIVERS	The school received a waiver of district policy to allow the provision of multi-credit course offerings, an improvement initiative identified in the SIP. In 1993, the school requested and received a waiver that allowed students lacking one or less course credits but enrolled in summer school or an adult education program to participate in graduation ceremonies. In 1994, Riverview reapplied for the waiver, but it was denied because students at other schools in the district did not have an equitable opportunity.
RESOURCE ALLOCATION	The principal reported that the district provided additional funds and allocation flexibility to help develop and implement school improvement plans. For example, schools have flexibility in allocating resources for textbooks they select to support their curriculum. The district allocated additional money for teacher release time, research, and inservice. The principal described Blueprint 2000 as a guiding force for determining how resources should be used.
FUNDS	The school received $13,000 through the Riverview High School Foundation, a non-profit organization whose mission is to enhance learning at Riverview. Among the many programs supported by the Foundation is teacher enhancement funding to assist teachers in traveling to bring back new knowledge and aids to their classroom. Business partners also provided approximately $3,000 in funds and in-kind contributions such as T-shirts and merchandise coupons to help support the Renaissance Program, an initiative designed to provide incentives for student academic performance.
DECISION-MAKING	The staff believes that stakeholder participation in site-based management has facilitated the school improvement process. Although site-based decision making was in place at Riverview prior to Blueprint 2000, the principal reported that decision responsibilities are now spread out among various committees, creating a broader base of accountability.

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RIVERVIEW HIGH SCHOOL PROFILE

IMPACT OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES ON STUDENTS

School Improvement Cited	Examples of Initiatives	Description and Impact of Initiatives	Relationship to BP 2000 Goals
Increased Academic Performance	Renaissance Program	The Renaissance Program, created by Jostens Corporation and used in over 7,000 schools in America, was initiated at Riverview High School in 1994. The initiative is designed to improve academic motivation and performance via a program of recognition/incentives provided through business/community partnerships to students who are academic achievers. As part of Renaissance, students earn gold, silver, or white T-shirts and I.D. cards, depending on their G.P.A. This program entitles these students to merchant discounts, free parking, and other incentives/bonuses. Data are available comparing the percentages of students having 3.0 - 4.0 G.P.A.s for the four quarters of the 1993-94 and the first three quarters of the 1994-95 school years. When comparing similar quarters for the two years, data indicate there has been at least a 5% increase in the number of students receiving a 3.0 - 4.0 G.P.A. each quarter since the Renaissance Program began.	Goals 3, 4

(continued)

School Improvement Cited	Examples of Initiatives	Description and Impact of Initiatives	Relationship to BP 2000 Goals
Increased Student Self-Esteem and Motivation	Various Strategies Including: ■ Welcome Wagon; and ■ Riverview Advisor Model (R.A.M.) Time.	Riverview High receives a significant number of new students from other areas of the country throughout the school year. The Welcome Wagon is a "user-friendly" orientation program designed to help new students adjust to their new school setting. Transfer students are assigned a full-time trained peer/student assistant; receive a welcome packet; and view an orientation video. R.A.M. Time, a program in which students work closely with a teacher/advisor to set individual goals, was instituted at Riverview High School during the 1993-94 school year. The program is unique in that students who successfully complete the R.A.M. Time course each year will earn .25 credit that will count as an elective toward meeting the 24-credit graduation requirement. Activities occurring during R.A.M. Time include review of grades; review of progress toward graduation; informational programs; enrichment/self-help activities; college/career planning; and individual advisement as needed. To evaluate the results of the Welcome Wagon Program, peer facilitators developed an informal evaluation questionnaire to be completed by student program participants. Positive questionnaire comments and feedback from these incoming students, their parents, and peer facilitators indicate that the program has facilitated transition to Riverview High School and resulted in improved student self-esteem. Although the school has conducted opinion surveys to evaluate the R.A.M. Time program process, a systematic method of evaluating program results in terms of student outcome has yet to be established.	Goals 2, 3 (continued)

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School Improvement Cited	Examples of Initiatives	Description and Impact of Initiatives	Relationship to BP 2000 Goals
Integrated Curriculum	Multi-Credit Course Offerings Through "Performing Arts and the Media"	"Performing Arts and the Media" is a multi-credit program which makes it easier for students to complete the 26 credits needed to apply for the Florida Scholars Program. The course, developed by the instructor, establishes a performance-based, non-timed, combined course offering encompassing three academic classes: Speech I, Acting I, and Mass Media II, and allows for cross academic area instructional techniques. It provides an integrated learning experience in which students acquire and apply knowledge in the same manner as the real-world setting. Evaluation is performance-based and emphasizes non-timed assessment to insure mastery. Samples of students' work from the class syllabus activities are included in students' video portfolios.	Goals 2, 3

SARASOTA COUNTY TECHNICAL INSTITUTE PROFILE

SCHOOL DESCRIPTION	
SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS, AS IDENTIFIED BY STAKEHOLDERS	In speaking with stakeholders, they identified certain school characteristics which should be considered when examining improvement initiatives at the school. These characteristics include: ■ The school provides training to students to make the transition from heavy, "smokestack" manufacturing, type jobs to more "high tech," high-wage oriented careers, light manufacturing, and service industries such as health, repair, and maintenance jobs; ■ Approximately 300 students at SCTI are still in high school but attend SCTI for vocational/technical training; ■ The three biggest programs at SCTI are still Health, Industrial, and Family and Consumer Services; and ■ Courses are offered during the day, evening, and on Saturday. Students may enroll or exit programs throughout the year.
NUMBER OF STUDENTS AND TEACHERS	■ 5,086 full time equivalent students ■ Approximately 15,000 students in 1994-95 (unduplicated, full and part-time) ■ 65 full-time, certificated staff members The school also has over 400 part-time instructional staff members.

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SARASOTA COUNTY TECHNICAL INSTITUTE PROFILE

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS	
NAME OF GROUP FUNCTIONING AS SAC	School Advisory Council (SAC)
MEMBERSHIP COMPOSITION OF 1994-95 SAC ACCORDING TO MEMBERSHIP LIST PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL (N = 12)	Administrators: 3 Teachers: 2 Support Staff: 1 Parents: 0 Business/Community: 3 Students: 3
SAC MEETINGS	The SAC generally met once per month on Monday nights at 7:00 p.m. A total of 9 meetings were held in 1994-95.
SAC MEMBER ATTENDANCE	Based on attendance records provided by the schools, persons listed as members of the SAC generally attended 1994-95 meetings. It was perceived that all members,including most business/community members of the SAC, attended scheduled meetings.
NEW SAC MEMBERS IN 1995	Compared to the 1994-95 SAC, 1 of 10 members of the 1995-96 SAC had not previously served on the SAC. SAC member turnover was not perceived as affecting the school's ability to develop and implement their school improvement plan. Time requirements associated with SAC responsibilities, job changes, and student graduation/program completion were cited as reasons SAC members leave prior to their term expiring or decide not to return the next year.
INVOLVEMENT OF SCHOOL STAFF	Teachers were involved in the school improvement process through membership on the School Management Team (SMT), which is comprised of school staff who are elected for three year terms. The SMT obtains input from the SAC and other faculty and, based on this input, writes and revises the school improvement plan. SAC members are appointed. Every staff member is provided a copy of the final school improvement plan and must base their annual performance objectives on the plan.

SARASOTA COUNTY TECHNICAL INSTITUTE PROFILE

PERCEPTIONS ON SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS	
MOST POSITIVE CONTRIBUTIONS OF BLUEPRINT 2000	■ Increased involvement of the business community in school affairs; ■ Provides a focus for school improvement; ■ Increased staff awareness on school improvements; and ■ Increased receptiveness of school administration to new ideas from teachers.
NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF BLUEPRINT 2000	■ Increased work load due to the need to document the status of school improvement projects for accountability purposes.
FACTORS THAT HAVE HELPED THE SCHOOL IMPROVE	■ The flexibility schools in the district already have to make decisions concerning resources and staffing; ■ Equipment and monetary donations from corporations; ■ Retrofitting grant received from the state to update technology at the school; and ■ Staff development.
FACTORS THAT HAVE HINDERED SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT	■ The perception that Blueprint 2000 applies more to kindergarten through 12th grade public schools than to vocational-technical schools; and ■ Staff time and effort was perceived by some as excessive. It appeared that teachers at this school spent a considerable amount of time documenting school improvement activities, compared to other schools we visited.

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SARASOTA COUNTY TECHNICAL INSTITUTE PROFILE

1994-95 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	
STATE GOALS INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	■ Goal 2 (Graduation Rate and Readiness for Postsecondary Education and Employment); ■ Goal 3 (Student Performance); and ■ Goal 6 (Teachers and Staff).
OBJECTIVES INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	The 1994-95 school improvement plan included six specific improvement objectives in the following general areas: ■ Improve career preparedness; ■ Increase problem solving, critical thinking skills; ■ Increase computer and technical competencies of students; ■ Increase computer competency of teachers/staff; and ■ Improve academic skills of at risk students or special needs students.
STRATEGIES INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	The 1994-95 school improvement plan included 16 improvement strategies or activities in the following general categories: ■ Agreement/cooperation with other agencies; ■ Develop and/or conduct surveys; ■ New modified curriculum; ■ Teacher/staff training; ■ Needs identification/assessment activities; planning, exploring, and assessing activities; and ■ Hire additional staff.
ADEQUATE PROGRESS AND EVALUATION	The 1994-95 school improvement plan includes descriptions of adequate progress and evaluation procedures.
	(continued)

SARASOTA COUNTY TECHNICAL INSTITUTE PROFILE

1994-95 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	
TRENDS IN PLANS	The institute's 1993-94 and 1994-95 school improvement plans are identical - both identify three school goals and both address three of the seven Blueprint 2000 goals. Specifically, both address Blueprint 2000 goals 2 (graduation rate and readiness for postsecondary education and employment), 3 (student performance), and 6 (teaches and staff). The school's 1995-96 improvement plan address only goals 2 and 3. The school included definitions of adequate progress in both the 1994-95 and 1995-96 school improvement plans, and continued to include methods for evaluation.

SARASOTA COUNTY TECHNICAL INSTITUTE PROFILE

IMPACT OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES ON SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION	
WAIVERS	SCTI has requested no waivers for school improvement. SCTI administrators believed no waivers were needed to make improvements at their school.
RESOURCE ALLOCATION	Blueprint 2000 was not perceived to have made a significant impact on resource allocation. About two years prior to Blueprint 2000, the school district adopted a shared decision-making model which uses a school management team comprised of faculty and staff to allocate resources. Under shared decision making, SCTI has increased flexibility in how it may shift resources. Blueprint 2000 has helped SCTI to direct resources to needs identified through the school improvement process. It was noted by school administrators that budget cuts over the past several years have made the flexibility more difficult. For example, in 1994-95, the SCTI budget was cut by 8%, which represented approximately $500,000.
ADDITIONAL FUNDS	In 1994-95, SCTI received a retrofit grant of $450,000 from the Department of Education which has enabled the SCTI to install fiber optic cable and software to develop a database and network the computers on campus.
DECISION-MAKING	It was perceived that there have been no changes in the way that decisions are made as a result of Blueprint 2000. However, the shared decision-making model adopted by the school board approximately two years prior to Blueprint 2000 has increased the input of faculty and staff in decision-making, such as in the allocation of resources.

SARASOTA COUNTY TECHNICAL INSTITUTE PROFILE

EXAMPLES OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES

School Improvement Cited	Examples of Initiatives	Description and Impact of Initiatives	Relationship to BP 2000 Goals
Improved Employment and Employability Skills	Special Needs Program	Sarasota County Technical Institute created a program to better ensure the approximately 300 students who attend with special needs (such as the handicapped) are provided services they require to complete their chosen technical programs and are employed. The Special Needs Program, based on models from Leon County (Florida) and the University of Wisconsin, is designed to provide career counseling and individual educational counseling, accommodations for testing, instructional modifications for technical programs, tutoring, identification of adaptive equipment, and cooperation with community agencies for transition for employment. In addition to providing support services, the SCTI has focused its efforts on modifying its buildings to accommodate students with special needs. As of September 1995, 49 adult students and 70 high school students were enrolled in the Special Needs Program with 35 additional students pending enrollment; approximately 250 students have been served since 1993. The program coordinator has conducted surveys of students who have received special needs support services. The survey indicates that students rated the quality of services received as "very good." The coordinator indicated that without the program, many special students would not have attended SCTI. SCTI is presently developing methods and collecting baseline data to better evaluate the overall success of the program.	Goals 2, 3 (continued)

School Improvement Cited	Examples of Initiatives	Description and Impact of Initiatives	Relationship to BP 2000 Goals
Improved Employment and Employability Skills through Improved Success of Small Businesses	Business Incubator Program	SCTI created a special program to improve the success of small businesses. The program provides a physical location off campus for office space at reduced rent. In addition, participants may use copiers, secretarial services, a FAX machine, telecommunications services, and computers. One of the objectives of the program is to reduce the financial burden on small businesses, thus enabling them to survive. Participants must enroll in small business management classes at SCTI and receive free business counseling services from S.C.O.R.E. (Senior Corp of Retired Executives). SCTI administrators indicated that 65% of businesses participating in the program survived the first year compared to a national average of approximately 20%.	Goals 2, 3
Improved Employment and Employability Skills through Improved Training of Students in the Automotive Industry	Automotive Training Programs	The automotive training programs at SCTI provide students with opportunities to learn the most up-to-date technology on foreign and domestic automobiles. The school has enhanced its program by entering into agreements with automobile manufactures, such as Toyota, to donate cars and other state of the art equipment. In exchange, these companies use SCTI facilities for meetings and send their employees to SCTI for training. Students in the program can elect to complete additional course work to earn an Associates of Science degree at the local community college. The project began in the 1991-92 school year, and two classes have completed the program as of Fall 1995. The school judges the success of the program based on the number of completers and placements. From 1992 through December 1995, 42 students have enrolled in the program, and 25 students have completed the program. In addition, all 25 completers of the program have been placed in automotive related jobs. Anecdotal feedback from industry representatives on SCTI industry councils suggests that students are now learning more directly applicable skills on the most current model vehicles, learning skills that are needed by today's automotive industry, and being hired by employers.	Goals 2, 3

Washington County School District

In September 1995, we reviewed the impact of Blueprint 2000 in the Washington County School District. Located in northwest Florida, Washington County has a population of approximately 18,100 and ranks 52nd of 67 counties in size in the state. Washington County residents have a diverse background. Approximately 83% of the residents are white, 15% are African American, and 2% are of other racial backgrounds. Approximately 1% of all Washington County residents are Hispanic. Half of the households in Washington County have an annual income of $18,266 or less; statewide, the median annual income is $27,483. In addition, 22% of the population of Washington County lives below the poverty level; Washington County has the 12th highest poverty rate in the state. Of Washington County residents age 18 and above, 39% have less than a high school education compared to 26% of state residents.

Stakeholders identified characteristics they believe should be considered in examining improvement initiatives in the Washington County School District. Washington is the smallest of the five districts we visited. Although the area experienced a period of growth with the introduction of several new businesses during the 1994-95 school year, stakeholders describe Washington as a rural county offering limited employment opportunities. District staff indicate that the primary employers in the district are the Department of Transportation, Bell South, Westpoint-Stevens, Walmart, and the Washington County School District. The district has two distinct school centers, one in Chipley and the other 16 miles away in Vernon. The district's physical facilities are old, but well-maintained, and the residents generally exhibit pride in the system in which many of them received their education.

Implementation of Blueprint 2000 in Washington County School District

The four schools we visited in the Washington County School District are involved in a number of activities they believe will result in needed improvements at their schools. While school improvement plans of all four schools include Blueprint 2000 goal 3, student performance, plans vary in the other state education goals they contain. Stakeholders believe that schools are implementing many school improvement initiatives relevant to Blueprint 2000 goals and objectives. At the four schools we visited, the most frequently cited improvements include increased computer competency of students/teachers; improved student behavior; improved writing skills; and improved career readiness. The schools provided evidence resulting from systematic evaluations such as standardized test scores, student academic grades, attendance records, the number of honor roll students, and disciplinary referrals to illustrate some of the improvements. In many cases, teacher observation of student performance and samples of student work are the primary indicators used to illustrate improvements. Some of the school improvement initiatives and programs are in the beginning phases of implementation, and it may be too early to determine their full impact. However, in some cases a systematic method of collecting data to evaluate the impact of their efforts has not been developed. In our review of school improvement plans, we found that the 1994-95 school improvement plans for the four schools in Washington County School District are among the most lengthy of the 19 schools we visited. Overall, the 1995-96 plans for all four schools are more focused than the 1993-94 and 1994-95 plans. For example, the 1993-94 and 1994-95 plans include six or seven of the state education goals, while the 1995-96 plans include only two or three of the goals. Finally, none of the four schools defined adequate progress in their 1993-94 plans, while all four schools describe adequate progress in their 1994-95 and 1995-96 plans.

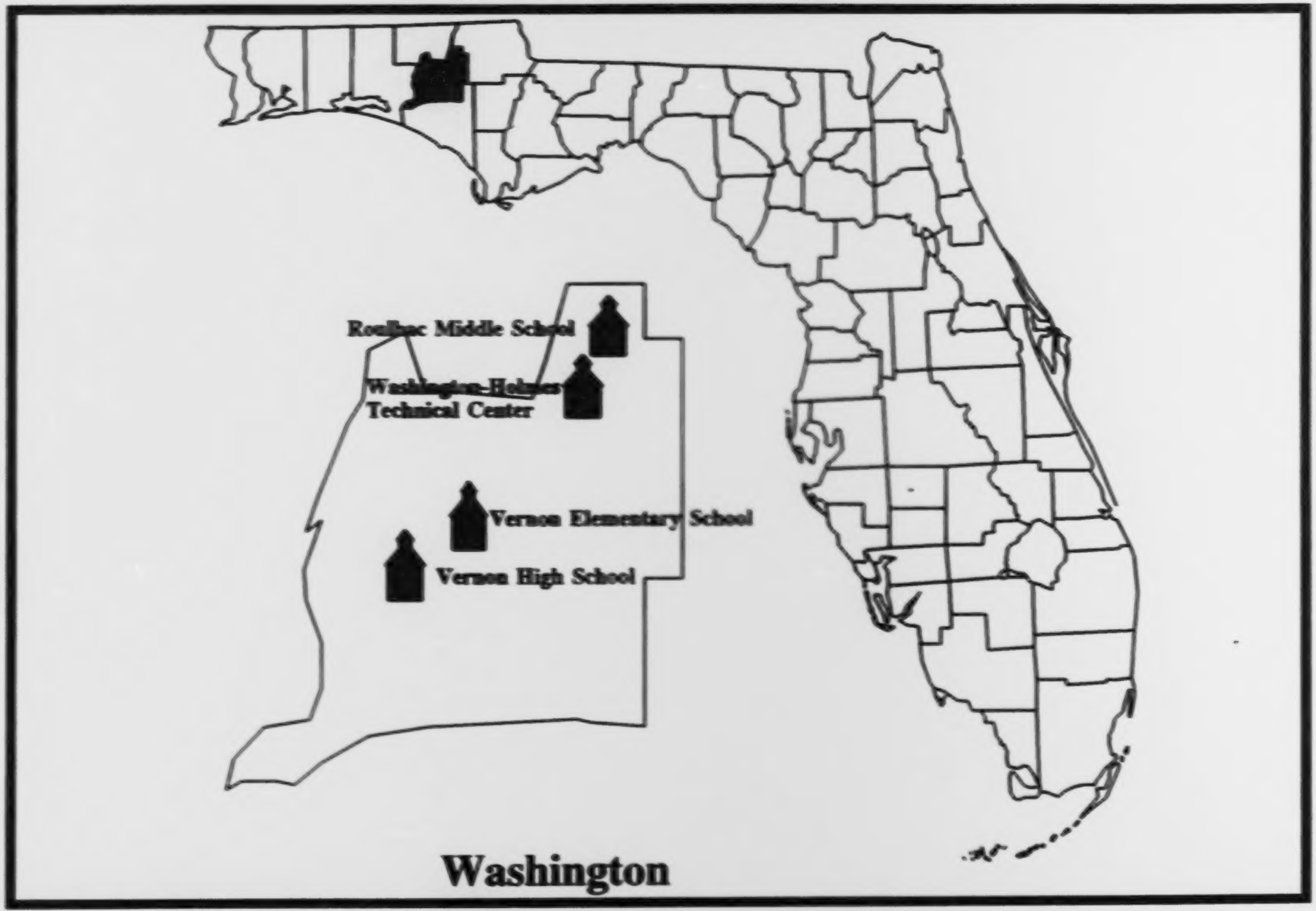
District and School Demographics

Washington County School District is one of the smallest of the state's 67 school districts; it ranks 56th in size with 3,113 prekindergarten through 12th grade students and 7 schools. Based on the latest information available from the Department of Education, approximately 79% of the district's students are white, 19% are African American, and 1% are Hispanic, compared to state averages of 59%, 25%, and 15%, respectively. One indicator often used to measure the poverty rate of a school district is the percentage of students eligible for free or reduced lunches. In 1994, the average percentage of students eligible to receive free or reduced lunches in Washington County schools was 54%. The median percentage of students eligible to receive free or reduced lunch in the state in 1994 was 43%. In 1994, the mobility rates in Washington County (i.e., percentage of students who transferred into or out of the school during the school year) were 27% for elementary school, 23% for middle schools, and 22% for high schools. The 1994 state median mobility rates were 36% for elementary schools, 31% for middle schools, and 33% for high schools. No students attended non-public kindergarten through 12th grade schools in Washington County in 1994-95.

We visited four public schools in Washington County: one elementary school, one middle school, one high school, and one vocational center. The largest school we visited is Washington-Holmes Technical Center with 772 students, and the smallest school is Roulhac Middle School with 433 students. We also visited Vernon High School with 315 students and Vernon Elementary School with 689 students. See Exhibit 15 for demographic information on the students attending each school we visited. See Exhibit 16 for student performance data for each school.

Exhibit 14

Location of Schools Visited in Washington County


Roulhac Middle School
Washington-Holmes Technical Center
Vernon Elementary School
Vernon High School
Washington

Source: Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability.

Exhibit 15

School	1995 Student Information						
	Number of Students	Percent Eligible to Receive Free/Reduced Lunch	White	African American	Hispanic	Other	Mobility Rate of Students
Vernon Elementary	689	73%	78%	20%	1%	1%	28%
Roulhac Middle	433	44%	82%	16%	0%	1%	24%
Vernon High	315	51%	76%	22%	1%	1%	23%
Washington-Holmes Tech.*	772	N/A	85%	14%	1%	1%	N/A

Note: Information on free/reduced lunches and mobility is based on 1994-95 school year data. Also, data on Vernon High School does not reflect middle school students who attend the school. * Number of students represents full time equivalents (FTEs).

Source: Based on information provided by the Department of Education and individual schools.

Exhibit 16

School	Student Performance Data					
	94 NRT Reading or HSCT Communication Scores	95 NRT Reading or HSCT Communication Scores	94 NRT or HSCT Mathematics Scores	95 NRT or HSCT Mathematics Scores	94 Florida Writing Scores	95 Florida Writing Scores
Vernon Elementary	52%	40%	58%	48%	14%	22%
Roulhac Middle	58%	65%	53%	57%	55%	77%
Vernon High	91%	94%	82%	83%	63%	81%

Note: For reading and mathematics in elementary and middle schools, data reflects percentage of students' scores above the 50th national percentile on Reading Comprehension and Mathematics Concepts/Applications subtests on national referenced tests (NRT). Data for high schools consists of passing scores on the Communications and Mathematics sections of the High School Competency Tests (HSCT) for first time test takers during the fall administration. Writing scores reflect the percentage of students scoring "3" and above on a scale of 0 to 6 on the Florida Writes assessment. This table includes student performance data for elementary, middle, and high schools visited

Source: Based on information provided by the Department of Education.

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School Board and District Administration

The Washington County School Board and district administrators are involved in assisting county schools in their efforts to improve. Board members pair off informally with schools in the district and provide suggestions to the school improvement team (SIT). The SIT is primarily responsible for developing school improvement plans and submitting them to the district advisory council (DAC) for approval. School board members also attend DAC meetings where plans and improvement initiatives are discussed to provide feedback, if requested. Board members are ultimately responsible for approving school improvement plans. During designated DAC meetings, the board provides recommendations for plan revisions after the principals present interim and end-of-year progress reports summarizing how their schools are progressing in their school improvement efforts. According to the board chair, when the board reviews a plan for approval, it closely considers whether the objectives are based on the needs assessment data and if they measure student achievement. The board also requested that the district Director of Instructional Services (Director) develop a school improvement planning document outline for the 1995-96 school year that the members and other stakeholders can use to periodically review and monitor the progress of school improvement initiatives throughout the school year.

The board delegated the primary responsibility for monitoring the implementation of plans to district administrative staff, particularly the Director. Although board members have not prescribed a format for school improvement plans, they are particularly interested in ensuring that key data elements are included in plans and have directed that plans be "reader-friendly." The Director works closely with school staff to ensure their plans meet Blueprint 2000 requirements and that they stay within the annual time frame of Blueprint 2000. The Director provides schools with suggested guidelines to aid them in plan development and instructs that plans specifically include four elements: the school climate survey; adequate progress definition; measurable objectives; and strategies for meeting the objectives. For the 1995-96 plans, the district allowed the schools to select and concentrate on any two of the seven state goal areas along with any other areas identified through the school's needs assessment. Previously, the schools had been instructed to include all seven goal areas in their plans.

District Advisory Council. Prior to the 1994-95 school year, Washington County School District had school advisory councils (SACs) at each school as provided by s. 229.58 (1)(a), F.S. However, beginning with the 1994-95 school year, pursuant to section 229.58 (1)(b), F.S,, the school district opted to create a district advisory council (DAC). Schools continue to organize school-level advisory councils consisting of teachers, parents, business/community members, and student representatives (when appropriate). The DAC consists of 31 members representing teachers, education support staff, students, parents, and business/community citizens as required by s. 229.58 (1)(b), F.S. Principals are ex-officio members of DAC. The DAC reviews and approves school improvement plans and provides a district-wide perspective to school improvement. In addition to the DAC, each school has a school improvement team (SIT) composed of teachers and support staff that has a role similar to that of SACs in other districts. SITs develop and assist in implementing the school improvement plans for their schools. Plans are presented to the DAC for consideration and approval prior to submission to the board. After studying a school's improvement plan, the DAC suggests revisions to ensure the plan is clear and outcomes are stated in measurable terms. School board members attend DAC meetings when improvement plans are presented by principals and discussed by the DAC members. The school board is ultimately responsible for approving school improvement plans.

District advisory council meetings are generally held every other month on Tuesday evenings. The DAC met five times during the 1994-95 school year. Based on the attendance records, 8 of 31 members attended on a regular basis during the 1994-school year (i.e., attended more than half the meetings). Of these eight, four were teachers, two were parents, and two were business/community representatives. Of the 31 members listed on the DAC's roster, 10 members did not attend any meetings. In addition to DAC members, various school board members, district administrators, principals, and teachers not serving on the DAC attended some meetings when school improvement plans were presented by school principals and discussed by the DAC. Membership turnover is minimal. For the 1995-96 school year, only 2 of 32 DAC members are new to the council. Members generally continue to serve on the council from year to year, and the DAC composition remains the same with few exceptions since

1993. Based on the low number of new members, turnover does not appear to negatively impact the council's ability to assist the schools we visited in their school improvement initiatives.

Perceptions on the School Improvement Process. Stakeholders (district administrators, school board members, principals, teachers, and DAC members) indicate that schools would have implemented many of the school improvement projects they identified without Blueprint 2000. However, Blueprint 2000 provides schools with a common sense of direction and a systematic framework for school improvement initiatives. Stakeholders indicate that one of the most positive contributions of Blueprint 2000 is that it provides a focus for school improvement initiatives by establishing a consistent structure that assists schools in examining where they are and in what direction they need to go to improve student performance. In addition, increased involvement of stakeholders, particularly that of parents and faculty members, in school improvement activities is cited as another primary contribution of Blueprint 2000. Stakeholders at two schools perceive that the provision of additional school improvement funds prompted by Blueprint 2000 enables staff to make improvements that might not have been possible otherwise. Stakeholders indicate that the primary negative impact associated with Blueprint 2000 is the additional amount of time required. Teachers report that a great deal of additional time is required to complete activities associated with the school improvement process (e.g., attending meetings, documenting progress, and completing school improvement reports).

Stakeholders identified several factors that they believe helps their schools make improvements. There is a general perception that leadership of the principal and other school administrators enables schools to make improvements. Stakeholders indicate that the primary factor facilitating school improvement is the increased support and positive attitudes of all stakeholder groups toward school improvement initiatives. The assistance and training provided by the Panhandle Area Educational Consortium (PAEC) is also perceived as an important factor in providing teachers opportunities to increase their knowledge of improvement strategies and to share ideas. Other factors identified include increased stakeholder involvement; the availability of additional resources (e.g., technology funds); and the district's decision to focus on a few, rather than all, Blueprint 2000 goals.

Stakeholders identified several factors as hindering school improvement efforts of the schools we visited. There is general agreement among school staff that they had initially attempted to address all Blueprint 2000 goals and standards, resulting in staff spending too much time and paperwork in implementing improvement efforts. Several individuals report that there is a lack of guidance from the state in helping the schools interpret whether they are taking proper actions to meet Blueprint 2000 requirements (e.g., developing adequate progress definitions). The time required for after-school meetings, documenting the implementation of strategies, preparing reports, and the lack of release time for teachers to deal with school improvement requirements are factors identified as hindering school improvement efforts. Other factors include limited parental and business/community involvement; insufficient human and fiscal resources to fully implement school improvement programs (e.g., campus alternative education programs); and lack of communication among district feeder schools in identifying students' needs as they progress through the school system. Lastly, staff at the vocational-technical center are concerned that DOE school improvement documents are not applicable to the vocational education model.

School Improvement Plans

Goals, Objectives, Strategies. The 1994-95 school improvement plans for the four schools we visited in Washington County are among the most lengthy of the 19 schools we visited. Vernon Elementary School and Roulhac Middle School include all seven state education goals in their 1994-95 school improvement plans, and Vernon High School and Washington-Holmes Technical Center include every goal except Goal 1 (Readiness to Start School). The four schools we visited also planned to improve in a wide variety of areas. For example, Roulhac Middle School identified 22 different areas to improve. The most common improvement areas across the four schools we visited are increased training and inservice for teachers and staff, improved students' career preparation, increased scores on standardized tests, and improved adult literacy. Additionally, school improvement plans describe numerous strategies that schools planned to implement to achieve their improvement objectives. For example, Vernon High School's plan includes 68 different improvement strategies. We identified the most common improvement strategies across the four schools:

- Teacher/staff training;
- Planning, exploring, and assessing activities; needs identification/assessment; and
- Develop incentives and/or academic recognition activities.

The school profiles that follow the district overview section provide additional information about school improvement plans at the four schools we visited.

Trends in Plans Over Time. We reviewed the 1993-94, 1994-95, and 1995-96 school improvement plans of the four schools we visited in Washington County School District. Overall, the 1995-96 plans for all four are more focused than the plans developed for 1993-94 and 1994-95. For example, the 1993-94 and 1994-95 plans include six or seven of the state education goals, while the 1995-96 plans includes only two or three of the goals. Additionally, the 1993-94 and 1994-95 plans of three of the schools include numerous objectives and strategies, nearly all of which are identical between the two years. However, the 1995-96 plans of these three schools include different objectives and strategies than the previous plans. Finally, none of the four schools define adequate progress in their 1993-94 plans, while all four schools define adequate progress in their 1994-95 and 1995-96 plans.

Impact of School Improvement

Students. Stakeholders (district administrators, school board members, principals, teachers, and SAC members) believe that schools are implementing many school improvement initiatives that are generally consistent with Blueprint 2000 goals and strategies. At the four schools we visited, the most frequently cited improvements include increased computer competency of students/teachers; improved student behavior; improved writing skills; and improved career readiness. Evidence resulting from standardized testing procedures (e.g., Florida Writes and other systematic evaluations) was provided to document several of the improvements made by schools. However, in many cases, teacher observation of student performance and samples of student work are the indicators used to illustrate improvements. Some of the school improvement initiatives are in the beginning phases of implementation, and it may be too early to measure their full impact. However, in some cases a systematic method of collecting data to evaluate the impact of their efforts has not been developed.

Teachers. Faculty members are involved in the school improvement process on several levels. All four schools have school improvement teams (SITs), consisting primarily of teacher representatives from various grade levels/specialty areas. Although the SIT is essentially responsible for conducting needs assessments and writing the school improvement plan, other faculty members make recommendations and are involved in developing the final plan submitted to the DAC for approval. Schools also have school-level advisory councils consisting of teachers, parents, and community representatives who provide recommendations to the SIT and assist the principal with general school management issues. Several teacher SIT members also serve on the DAC, and other SIT members attend DAC meetings because they are interested in keeping informed about the district's overall school improvement efforts. Teachers also attend school improvement workshops provided by the district. One principal describes school improvement as an ongoing process in which teachers are constantly involved in helping the SIT answer the question, "Where do we go from here?" Teachers expressed mixed feelings when we asked whether the time and effort they spend planning and implementing school improvement activities takes too much time away from their teaching activities. However, teachers appear frustrated about the amount of time initially spent developing their school improvement plans. Originally, district and school staff believed that school improvement plans had to include strategies addressing all seven Blueprint 2000 goal areas. This misunderstanding resulted in many teachers feeling overwhelmed by the amount of time required to attend numerous meetings to develop and implement school improvement plans. For example, teachers at one school stated that they were often taken out of class and frequently had to attend after-school meetings focusing on the development and implementation of school improvement plans and strategies. Staff indicate that 1995-96 plans focus on several specific goal areas and believe that the time requirements will probably be less intense in the future.

School Administration. Stakeholders generally believe that under Blueprint 2000, school administrators and site-based management teams have some additional flexibility to allocate resources as needed, and that faculty members provide more input on budget issues. Principals report that schools often prioritize their spending according to the areas of greatest need identified in school improvement plans. Based on the district's needs assessment in 1994-95, the board also decided to allocate the funds received through an ad valorem tax increase to support needed technological improvements. Although administrators report that Washington County schools used site-based management prior to the implementation of Blueprint 2000, administrators perceive that district staff and school board members support innovative strategies in resource allocation decisions. For example, at one school, based on the needs assessment, the staff decided to emphasize math strategies during the 1994-95 school year and elected to allocate resources for math workshops and the purchase of additional math manipulative instructional materials. However, administrators also point out that although site-based management schools in Washington County have control over discretionary spending, district budget cuts over the past few years make budget flexibility more difficult.

Highlights of School Improvement Initiatives. The four schools we visited in Washington County School District are implementing numerous projects to improve. This section provides brief highlights of a few of these improvements:

- Blueprint Goal 3, Student Performance: **Improved Reading Skills**. As part of its overall efforts to improve student academic performance, Vernon Elementary School implemented the Sing, Spell, Read, & Write Program that combines the teaching of reading, writing, phonics, spelling, speaking, and comprehension by actively involving students in a number of participatory activities. Several of the activities include reading storybooks, playing games, and participating in sing-a-long activities. The program was first implemented in the 1994-95 school year in kindergarten classes and two of five 1st grade classes. In 1995-96 school year, the program was expanded to include one of four 2nd grade classes. Although teachers believe that it may be too early to measure the impact of the program, they report observing increases in the reading skills of 1st grade students whose teachers use the instructional program. The school will evaluate the success of the program by maintaining portfolios of student work and reviewing standardized test scores.

- Blueprint Goal 3, Student Performance: **Increased Computer Literacy**. As part of its overall efforts to improve student performance, Roulhac Middle School implemented a variety of activities to improve technological skills. Roulhac established two computer labs and has initiated its Computer Applications Classes I and II to provide freshmen the word processing skills that would enable them to perform successfully when they enter high school. The program evolved to include computer applications and career choices. Students have the opportunity to learn how to use a variety of software packages including spreadsheets and word processing. Students' improved technological skills impact their performance in other subject areas, (e.g., using computers to produce written reports). Once students learn basic computer skills, they use the Choices Junior software program to learn about career options. Although pre- and post- tests are not administered to determine growth in basic computer skills, samples of the students' work produced using the computer and teacher observations of students using computers in the classroom indicate that skills appear to have increased. Teachers' observations indicate that students who had never been exposed to computer technology can now use various software programs to complete assignments.

- **Blueprint Goal 3, Student Performance: Block Scheduling**. As part of its overall efforts to improve student performance, Vernon High school initiated block scheduling in 1990. The block scheduling model is set up so that each Monday is a 6-period day used to introduce the study topics and projected assignments for the week. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, there are three 100-minute blocks for three classes. On Wednesdays and Fridays, there are also three 100-minute blocks for another three classes. The extended periods enable teachers to provide more in-depth instruction, and students to have an opportunity to concentrate on fewer subjects at one time. They are also able to engage in projects and activities for extended periods of time with fewer interruptions. While no formal method has yet been developed to evaluate the impact of block scheduling, the principal reports that after the implementation of block scheduling, the number of students on the A/B honor roll increased by approximately 30% and disciplinary referrals decreased by approximately one-half. Administrators observe that teacher and student morale increased because teachers feel they have more time to provide in-depth instruction, and students feel they have more time to learn. Also, the principal perceives that the number of students failing classes has dropped, but did not have specific information on numbers.

- **Blueprint Goal 4, Learning Environment: Increased Student Enrollment**. As part of its overall efforts to increase student enrollment, the Washington-Holmes Technical Center conducted an extensive media information campaign and held an open house for community members during the 1994-95 school year. The effort was initiated to heighten the community's awareness of the school's services; to provide information about the programs offered by the Center; and to reduce the stigma often associated with vocational education. Prior to this concerted effort to make the community and school board members more aware of the programs provided by the Center, the school's FTE count was extremely low. Following these marketing efforts, student enrollment increased in February and continued to increase in June and July. The superintendent reported that these increases accounted for the district earning at least $442,000 more than it would have if the student enrollment for February and June had stayed the same as for July and October 1994.

School Profiles

The following school profiles contain specific information about the implementation and impact of Blueprint 2000 at each of the schools we visited in Washington County School District. Each school profile provides information on school improvements cited by stakeholder groups, school improvement plans, and stakeholder perceptions on Blueprint 2000.

Washington County School District

School Profiles

Vernon Elementary School

Roulhac Middle School

Vernon High School

Washington-Holmes Technical Center

WASHINGTON COUNTY DISTRICT ADVISORY COUNCIL

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS	
NAME OF GROUP FUNCTIONING AS SAC	District Advisory Council (DAC)
MEMBERSHIP COMPOSITION OF 1994-95 DAC ACCORDING TO MEMBERSHIP LIST PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL (N=31)	Administrators: 0 Teachers: 7 Support Staff: 3 Parents: 9 Business/Community: 8 Students: 4
DAC MEETINGS	During the 1994-95 school year, DAC meetings were held every other month on Tuesdays at 6:00 in the evening. The DAC met five times during the year.
DAC MEMBER ATTENDANCE	Overall, attendance at the DAC meetings was low; 7 to 13 DAC members attended each meeting. About a third of the members never attended a meeting. Parents and students had the worst attendance record; teachers had the best record for attendance.
DAC MEMBER TURNOVER	For the 1995-96 school year, only 2 of the 32 DAC members were new to the council. Turnover was not perceived to be a problem because members have continued to serve on the council from year to year. The DAC composition has remained the same with few exceptions for the past three school years (1992-93, 1993-94, 1994-95).
INVOLVEMENT OF SCHOOL STAFF	Teachers and school support personnel are represented on the DAC. Each school has a school improvement team (SIT) comprised of teachers and support staff that serves a similar role as SACs in other districts. SITs develop and implement the school improvement plans that are presented to the DAC for review and approval. After studying the school's improvement plan, the DAC suggests revisions to ensure the plan is clear and outcomes are stated in measurable terms.

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VERNON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROFILE

SCHOOL DESCRIPTION	
SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS, AS IDENTIFIED BY STAKEHOLDERS	Stakeholders identified characteristics they believed should be considered when examining the improvement initiatives at the school. These characteristics include: ■ Vernon Elementary is located on a 17-acre rural campus and serves multiple communities from a several-hundred square mile area; ■ Various structural sections of the aging facility were brought in from existing schools in the surrounding communities to create a large portion of the structure; ■ The students come primarily from lower socioeconomic backgrounds; and ■ The school has a strong parent/community volunteer program.
NUMBER OF STUDENTS AND TEACHERS IN 1995	■ 689 students ■ 35 teachers

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VERNON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROFILE

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS	
NAME OF GROUP FUNCTIONING AS SAC	District Advisory Council (See beginning of School Profiles for description.)
INVOLVEMENT OF SCHOOL STAFF	Staff are involved in the school improvement process on several levels. The school's administrative council, consisting of the principal and grade-level team chairs, has the primary decision-making responsibility for the school. The school-level advisory council, consisting of teachers, support staff, business/community members, parents, and students, provides input regarding the school improvement plan to the school improvement team (SIT). The SIT, consisting of teachers, parents, community members, and other staff members, develops and assists in the implementation of the school improvement plan that is presented to the district advisory council (DAC) for approval.

VERNON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROFILE

PERCEPTIONS ON SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS	
MOST POSITIVE CONTRIBUTIONS OF BLUEPRINT 2000	■ Provided more planning and focus for school improvement initiatives; ■ Increased involvement of stakeholders in school improvement planning; and ■ Prompted increased funding to implement school improvement projects (e.g., provision of additional ad valorem taxes for technological improvements).
NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF BLUEPRINT 2000	■ Takes too much time from teacher classroom planning activities which has caused decreased teacher morale. In addition, since teachers have no early release time, the school principal hires substitutes to enable teachers to develop the school improvement plan. The cost of the substitutes totals $800 per day for two days.
FACTORS THAT HAVE HELPED THE SCHOOL IMPROVE	■ Support and leadership of the principal; ■ Additional funds (e.g., Environmental Wetlands Grant) and flexibility resulting from the school being designated as a Federal Title I school; ■ Narrowed focus of plans; ■ Supportive Parent Teacher Organization (PTO); ■ Willingness of faculty to participate in improvement initiatives; and ■ Training provided by the Panhandle Area Educational Consortium (PAEC) (e.g., needs assessments, integrated curriculum, and technology).

(continued)

VERNON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROFILE

PERCEPTIONS ON SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS	
FACTORS THAT HAVE HINDERED SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT	■ Initially attempted to address all Blueprint 2000 goals and standards, resulting in staff spending too much time and paperwork in implementing improvement efforts; ■ Resource constraints (e.g., large pupil/teacher ratio, and budget cutbacks); ■ Lack of understanding some Blueprint 2000 requirements (e.g., developing adequate progress definitions); and ■ Inadequate release time for teachers to deal with school improvement requirements.

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VERNON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROFILE

1994-95 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	
STATE GOALS INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	All seven state education goals were included in the 1994-95 school improvement plan.
OBJECTIVES INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	The 1994-95 school improvement plan included 15 specific improvement objectives in the following categories: ■ Increase daily attendance; ■ Improve reading; ■ Reduce the number of disciplinary actions; ■ Improve academic skills of at-risk students, special needs students; ■ Increase scores on standardized tests; ■ Improve the transition of students/orientation; ■ Increase training or inservice for teachers/staff; and ■ Improve career preparedness.
	(continued)

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VERNON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROFILE

1994-95 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	
STRATEGIES INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	The 1994-95 school improvement plan included 48 school improvement strategies or activities in the following general areas: ■ Implement specific academic projects; new or modified curriculum; ■ Agreement/cooperation with other agencies; parental and community involvement activities; publications/information dissemination; provide training/materials to parents; ■ Purchase equipment; ■ Alternative assessment; develop/institute cross-grade articulation programs; testing of students for placement/placement of students; utilize integrated instruction approach/block scheduling; ■ Teacher/staff training; ■ Planning, exploring, and assessing options; develop or conduct surveys; needs identification/assessment activities; ■ Develop incentives and/or academic recognition activities; and ■ Expand student and/or staff libraries.
ADEQUATE PROGRESS AND EVALUATION	The plan includes both a description of how the school will determine adequate progress and methods of evaluation.
TRENDS IN PLANS	The 1995-96 school improvement plan was much more focused than the 1993-94 and 1994-95 school improvement plans. For example, the 1993-94 and 1994-95 plans included all seven state goals, while the 1995-96 plan focuses on Goal 3 (student performance) and Goal 6 (teachers and staff). Additionally, the 1993-94 and 1994-95 plans included numerous improvement objectives and strategies, most of which were identical between the two years. Finally, the 1994-95 and 1995-96 school improvement plans included definitions of adequate progress, whereas the 1993-94 plan did not.

VERNON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROFILE

IMPACT OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES ON SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

WAIVERS	None requested.
RESOURCE ALLOCATION	The school board allocated the funds received through a quarter mil ad valorem tax increase for the purchase of additional computers and software for Washington County schools. This decision was based on the district's needs assessment. The principal reported that Vernon Elementary School had also received increased flexibility in the use of Federal funds as a result of becoming a Federal Title I school.
FUNDS	For the 1995-96 school year, the school board provided Vernon Elementary $29,750 in additional ad valorem tax funds for the purchase of computers. The school also received funds from a variety of other sources including: Project WILD Action Grant ($500); Title II funds, Improving America's Schools Act, for staff development of science and math teachers ($1,747); Title I Parent Involvement funds ($2,715); Title VI funds, Innovative Education Program Strategies, for improving alternative teaching/assessment strategies, student writing, math problem-solving, and reading skills ($4,548); Technology Incentive Funds for technological equipment and training ($13,278); and teacher inservice allocations ($1,568).
DECISION-MAKING	The principal reported that Vernon Elementary staff and other stakeholders were actively engaged in school improvement prior to the implementation of Blueprint 2000 and that there have been no significant changes in the school's decision-making process since Blueprint 2000 initiatives began. The principal indicated that staff and community member input has always been included in the decision-making process. The school has been involved in short- and long-range planning since the early seventies and has had an Administrative Council since 1976.

VERNON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROFILE

IMPACT OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES ON STUDENTS

School Improvement Cited	Examples of Initiatives	Description and Impact of Initiatives	Relationship to BP 2000 Goals
Improved Writing Skills	Inservice of Teachers	Teachers received training in areas such as whole language, computers, and writing skills. This training enabled teachers to help students improve their writing skills. Fourth grade students' scores on the Florida Writes Test have increased from an average of 1.85 in 1993-94 to 2.10 in 1994-95. In addition, the percentage of students who scored at least 3.0 on the Florida Writes Test increased from 14% to 22% during the same period.	Goals 3, 5
Improved Discipline	Parental Involvement Activities	The school implemented numerous parental involvement activities such as monthly calendars, weekly notes to parents, and a literacy volunteers program to keep parents more informed about the school and to increase overall volunteer hours. While parent involvement increased, discipline problems at the school dropped. Compared to 1993-94, in 1994-95 there were fewer reports of abusive behavior, physical/verbal abuse on students/staff, arguing, violations of bus rules, disruptive behavior, fighting, and stealing. Overall, disciplinary actions decreased from 859 in 1993-94 to 368 in 1994-95 (57% reduction).	Goal 5

(continued)

VERNON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROFILE

IMPACT OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES ON STUDENTS

School Improvement Cited	Examples of Initiatives	Description and Impact of Initiatives	Relationship to BP 2000 Goals
Improved Reading Skills	Sing, Spell, Read, & Write Program	The Sing, Spell, Read, & Write Program combines the teaching of reading, writing, phonics, spelling, speaking, and comprehension by actively involving students in a number of participatory activities. Several of the activities include reading storybooks, playing games, and participating in sing-a-long activities. The program was first implemented in the 1994-95 school year in kindergarten classes and two of five 1st grade classes. In the 1995-96 school year, the program was expanded to include one of four 2nd grade classes. Teachers believed that it may be too early to measure the impact of the program. However, they have begun to observe increases in the reading skills of 1st grade students whose teachers used the instructional program. The school will evaluate the success of the program by maintaining portfolios of student work and reviewing standardized test scores.	Goal 3

ROULHAC MIDDLE SCHOOL PROFILE

SCHOOL DESCRIPTION	
SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS, AS IDENTIFIED BY STAKEHOLDERS	Stakeholders identified certain school characteristics which should be considered in examining improvement initiatives at the school. These characteristics include: ■ Roulhac is one of two middle schools in the district. The school is located in a small, rural town that has a relatively stable population and high unemployment rate; ■ The high unemployment rate is a major factor in designating the school as an "enterprise zone." The administrative and faculty turnover rate was high in 1994-95. The principal, assistant principal, and 4 of the 25 teachers were new to the school.
NUMBER OF STUDENTS AND TEACHERS IN 1995	■ 433 students ■ 25 teachers

ROULHAC MIDDLE SCHOOL PROFILE

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS	
NAME OF GROUP FUNCTIONING AS SAC	Roulhac has an active school advisory council in addition to the DAC. The SAC consists of parents, students, teachers, administrators, and non-instructional staff. This council meets throughout the school year to review and evaluate climate surveys, mission and vision statements, student test scores, school improvement plans, the school curriculum, and the school environment. District Advisory Council (See beginning of School Profiles for description.)
INVOLVEMENT OF SCHOOL STAFF	In 1994-95, the SIT composition consisted of teacher representatives from each grade level/specialty area, the PTO president, and a school board member. The SIT is primarily responsible for school improvement initiatives, (e.g., conducts needs assessments and writes the school improvement plan). However, the entire faculty develops the school's vision and mission statements, identifies areas needing improvement, and provides input to the SIT. At the beginning of the school year, the SIT develops a monitoring checklist based on the school improvement plan indicating which individuals are responsible for various plan components. Teachers attend school improvement workshops provided by the district. The principal describes school improvement as an ongoing process in which teachers are constantly involved in helping the SIT answer the question, "Where do we go from here?"

ROULHAC MIDDLE SCHOOL PROFILE

PERCEPTIONS ON SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS	
MOST POSITIVE CONTRIBUTIONS OF BLUEPRINT 2000	■ Provides a focus for planning and involvement in school improvement; ■ Increases parental involvement; and ■ Helps prepare students for the workforce, college, or technical school.
NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF BLUEPRINT 2000	■ Overwhelming process; ■ Initial misinterpretation of Blueprint 2000 requirements resulting in much time being spent in conducting meetings to develop and implement school improvement plans. For example, district and school staff thought the school improvement plan had to include all goal areas; and ■ Additional paperwork required for documentation (e.g., reporting on implementation of strategies and progress).
FACTORS THAT HAVE HELPED THE SCHOOL IMPROVE	■ Strong leadership of the principal; ■ Additional resources from increased ad valorem taxes for technology purchases; ■ Involvement and support of district office staff; ■ Involvement of school board members in plan development/evaluation, procedures, and outcomes; ■ Site-based management encouraged by school board members; ■ Decision to focus on a few, rather than all, Blueprint 2000 goals; and ■ Assistance and training from the Panhandle Area Educational Consortium (PAEC).

(continued)

ROULHAC MIDDLE SCHOOL PROFILE

PERCEPTIONS ON SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS	
FACTORS THAT HAVE HINDERED SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT	■ Lack of guidance to interpret whether they are taking proper actions to meet Blueprint 2000 requirements; ■ Initial misinterpretation of Blueprint 2000 requirements resulting in too much time, paperwork, and setbacks in school's efforts to address all goal areas; ■ Excessive time required to document implementation of strategies and progress; ■ Lack of funds to fully implement school improvement programs (e.g., campus alternative education programs); ■ Lack of coordination/communication among feeder schools to identify students' needs; and ■ Lack of a long-term plan with yearly objectives.

ROULHAC MIDDLE SCHOOL PROFILE

1994-95 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	
STATE GOALS INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	All seven state education goals were included in the 1994-95 school improvement plan.
OBJECTIVES INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	The 1994-95 school improvement plan included 22 specific improvement objectives in the following categories: ■ Increase daily attendance; ■ Improve reading, writing, and math skills; ■ Improve academic skills of students other than reading, writing, and math skills; ■ Improve multicultural awareness, interaction, and cooperation; ■ Expand course offerings; ■ Reduce class size; ■ Improve adult literacy; ■ Improve school safety; ■ Increase problem solving, critical thinking, etc.; ■ Improve student responsibility, cooperativeness, maturity, adjustments, and social skills; ■ Improve academic skills of at-risk students, special needs students; ■ Increase scores on standardized tests; ■ Increase computer competency of students; ■ Improve the transition of students/orientation; and ■ Increase training or inservice for teachers/staff.

(continued)

ROULHAC MIDDLE SCHOOL PROFILE

1994-95 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

STRATEGIES INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	The 1994-95 school improvement plan included 67 school improvement strategies or activities in the following general areas: ■ Implement specific academic projects; new or modified curriculum; ■ Coordinate in-school activities; ■ Agreement/cooperation with other agencies; parental and community involvement activities; publications/information dissemination; ■ Alternative education programs; conduct field trips; ■ Increased use of computers in curriculum; purchase technology equipment/computer hardware; ■ Testing of students for placement/placement of students; ■ Teacher/staff training; fund raising/seeking activities; ■ Improving physical facilities; ■ Planning, exploring, and assessing options; needs identification/assessment activities; ■ Develop incentives and/or academic recognition activities; and ■ Expand student and/or staff libraries; establish wellness/fitness programs.
ADEQUATE PROGRESS AND EVALUATION	The plan includes both a description of how the school will determine adequate progress and methods of evaluation.

(continued)

ROULHAC MIDDLE SCHOOL PROFILE

1994-95 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	
TRENDS IN PLANS	The 1995-96 school improvement plan is much more focused than the 1993-94 and 1994-95 school improvement plans. For example, the 1993-94 and 1994-95 plans included all seven state goals, while the 1995-96 plan focuses on Goal 3 (student Performance) and Goal 5 (School Safety). Additionally, the 1993-94 and 1994-95 plans included numerous improvement objectives and strategies, most of which were identical between the two years. Finally, the 1994-95 and 1995-96 school improvement plans included definitions of adequate progress, whereas the 1993-94 plan did not.

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ROULHAC MIDDLE SCHOOL PROFILE

IMPACT OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES ON SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION	
WAIVERS	None requested.
RESOURCE ALLOCATION	The school has increased flexibility in that the district staff and school board have supported the principal and staff in trying new strategies in resource allocation decisions. The principal reported that the school prioritized spending according to the areas of greatest need as identified in the school improvement plan. For example, in 1994-95, the principal, teachers, and site-based management technology team decided to allocate their additional technology funds based on the needs of the students in the Technical Preparation Program. Based on the 1994-95 school needs assessment, the staff decided to emphasize math strategies and allocated resources for teacher planning time, release time for math workshops, and additional math manipulative instructional materials during the 1995-96 school year.
FUNDS	The district has provided additional resources for technology purchases through a quarter mil increase in ad valorem taxes. In 1994-95, the school received approximately $20,000 through this initiative.
DECISION-MAKING	The district staff and school board support the principal in trying new strategies, including site-based management. The principal reported that faculty are more involved in making decisions (e.g., hiring staff and curriculum changes) since the implementation of Blueprint 2000, but perceives that she is ultimately responsible for the decisions made.

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ROULHAC MIDDLE SCHOOL PROFILE

IMPACT OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES ON STUDENTS			
School Improvement Cited	**Examples of Initiatives**	**Description and Impact of Initiatives**	**Relationship to BP 2000 Goals**
Increased Computer Literacy	Computer Applications Classes	Roulhac created two computer labs and initiated its Computer Applications Classes I and II to provide freshmen word processing skills they would need to succeed when entering high school. The program evolved to include computer applications and career choices. Students have the opportunity to learn how to use a variety of software packages including spreadsheets and word processing. Once students learn basic computer skills, they use the Choices Junior software program to learn about career options. Student progress is determined through daily observation, weekly quizzes, and six-weeks evaluations. Pre- and post-tests are not administered to determine growth in basic computer skills. However, portfolio samples of students' work and teacher observations of students using various software programs indicate that technological skills have improved.	Goal 3 (continued)

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School Improvement Cited	Examples of Initiatives	Description and Impact of Initiatives	Relationship to BP 2000 Goals
Increased Career Awareness	Career Choices Junior Program	The Career Choices Junior program was initiated at Roulhac in 1994 and is offered to all eighth grade students. The program provides career awareness opportunities to students early in their educational programs. The program requires that students initially complete a checklist which assists them in identifying their personality characteristics. This assessment aids students in selecting career areas to explore through completing computer activities. Students maintain career inventories and samples of their computer work products in individual portfolios. Upon completion of the career awareness activities, each student completes a Career Pathways Planner. Successful completion of the planner and registration for high school serve as indicators of high school readiness and a student's ability to make informed course selections. Teachers also observe that students enrolled in the program can talk more knowledgeably about career choices and are completing more assignments (e.g., developing a newsletter) using the computers. Since this is only the second year of the program, a more systematic method of evaluating the program's effect on high school readiness and informed course selections related to career choices is yet to be developed.	Goals 2, 3 (continued)

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School Improvement Cited	Examples of Initiatives	Description and Impact of Initiatives	Relationship to BP 2000 Goals
Improved Writing Skills	Integrated Writing Curriculum	Teachers received training in Integrated Writing instructional strategies during the 1993-94 and 1994-95 school years. In their daily planning, teachers are continually placing additional emphasis on writing skills improvement. Students have the opportunity to practice and improve their writing skills by incorporating them in assignments crossing subject areas (e.g., writing reports in science and history classes). Progress in developing writing skills is reflected in the results of the statewide writing assessment instrument, Florida Writes. When comparing 1994 and 1995 data, 8th grade students' average writing scores increased from 2.9 to 3.2 (10% increase).	Goal 3

VERNON HIGH SCHOOL PROFILE

SCHOOL DESCRIPTION	
SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS, AS IDENTIFIED BY STAKEHOLDERS	Stakeholders identified certain school characteristics which should be considered in examining improvement initiatives at the school. These characteristics include: ■ Vernon High School is located in a small, rural community with many students coming from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. Vernon Middle School is located on the same campus and shares the same administration as the high school; ■ Student mobility has traditionally been low, varying largely based on jobs available within the county for school parents; and ■ Stakeholders generally exhibit pride in the system in which many of them received their education.
NUMBER OF STUDENTS AND TEACHERS IN 1995	■ 315 students ■ 21 teachers

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VERNON HIGH SCHOOL PROFILE

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS	
NAME OF GROUP FUNCTIONING AS SAC	District Advisory Council (See beginning of School Profiles for description.)
INVOLVEMENT OF SCHOOL STAFF	The school has a SAC which is composed of 11 parents and meets with the principal biweekly on school improvement issues. The school also has an active school improvement team (SIT). All participants are volunteers. SIT members work to develop the school's improvement plan and provide input to the principal on school matters. Some of the SIT members are on the district advisory council (DAC), and other interested SIT members attend DAC meetings.

VERNON HIGH SCHOOL PROFILE

PERCEPTIONS ON SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS	
MOST POSITIVE CONTRIBUTIONS OF BLUEPRINT 2000	■ The process of preparing the school improvement plan (SIP) makes a school examine itself and where it needs to go; ■ The structure of Blueprint forces one to look at what they are doing; and ■ Funding associated with Blueprint allows the school staff to do things they could not have done otherwise.
NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF BLUEPRINT 2000	■ The amount of time required in planning was excessive. Teachers reported being taken out of classes and held after school to attend meetings. One group working on the SIP met every week for a year; and ■ Schools may not set their goals and objectives as high as they might have because of their fear of outside evaluation.
FACTORS THAT HAVE HELPED THE SCHOOL IMPROVE	■ Availability of funding for technology; ■ Positive attitude of teachers and students; and ■ The school climate is supportive of school improvement, and there has been a long history of continuous school improvement.
FACTORS THAT HAVE HINDERED SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT	■ Although some funds have been available for specific categories (e.g., technology) the district's overall budget had to be cut back last year. Teacher positions were cut at Vernon; ■ Would like to have more parental involvement; and ■ Business involvement has been limited because the town of Vernon doesn't have a large business community. However, the school is involved in developing business partnerships at the school level. For example, the school has developed a business partnership with the Pepsi Company. The district is also exploring district-wide business partnerships.

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VERNON HIGH SCHOOL PROFILE

1994-95 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	
STATE GOALS INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	■ Goal 2 (Graduation Rate and Readiness for Postsecondary Education and Employment); ■ Goal 3 (Student Performance); ■ Goal 4 (Learning Environment); ■ Goal 5 (School Safety); ■ Goal 6 (Teachers and Staff); and ■ Goal 7 (Adult Literacy).
OBJECTIVES INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	The 1994-95 school improvement plan included nine specific improvement objectives in the following categories: ■ Increase scores on standardized tests; ■ Improve career preparedness; ■ Increase student motivation, self esteem; ■ Improve student responsibility, cooperativeness, maturity, adjustments, and social skills; ■ Improve school environment; ■ Increase parental involvement; ■ Improve adult literacy; ■ Improve school safety; and ■ Increase training or inservice for teachers/staff.

(continued)

VERNON HIGH SCHOOL PROFILE

1994-95 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

STRATEGIES INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The 1994-95 school improvement plan included 68 school improvement strategies or activities in the following general areas:

- Set up special academic sessions;
- Student orientation classes;
- New or modified curriculum;
- Parental and community involvement activities; provide training and/or materials to parents;
- Increased use of computers in curriculum; purchase technology/equipment/computer hardware; purchase/use applied software;
- Utilize integrated instruction approach/block scheduling; alternative assessment;
- Teacher/staff training; fund raising/seeking activities;
- Hire additional staff; reduce teacher workload;
- Improve physical facilities;
- Planning, exploring, and assessing options; needs identification/assessment activities; establish committees, study groups, planning groups; develop career planners;
- Develop incentives and/or academic recognition activities;
- Expand student and/or staff libraries; and
- Develop, implement, modify discipline plan; implement multicultural activities.

(continued)

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VERNON HIGH SCHOOL PROFILE

1994-95 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	
ADEQUATE PROGRESS AND EVALUATION	The plan includes both a description of how the school will determine adequate progress and methods of evaluation.
TRENDS IN PLANS	The 1995-96 school improvement plan is more focused than the 1993-94 and 1994-95 school improvement plans. For example, the 1993-94 and 1994-95 plans included six of the seven state education goals (excluding Goal 1 - School Readiness), while the 1995-96 plan focuses on Goal 2 (Graduation Rate and Readiness for Postsecondary Education and Employment) and Goal 3 (student Performance). Additionally, the 1993-94 and 1994-95 plans included numerous improvement objectives and strategies, most of which were identical between the two years. Finally, the 1994-95 and 1995-96 school improvement plans included definitions of adequate progress, whereas the 1993-94 plan did not.

VERNON HIGH SCHOOL PROFILE

IMPACT OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES ON SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION	
WAIVERS	Vernon High School did not request any waivers in the past two years.
RESOURCE ALLOCATION	The emphasis on enhancing learning through technology was a factor in the school board's decision to require schools to use millage funds to implement a technology plan. The principal reported that the changes in resource allocation procedures affecting the school were the result of site-based management and not Blueprint 2000. As a site-based management school, stakeholders have control over discretionary spending.
FUNDS	The school received a multi-year grant of about $250,000 starting in 1989-90 from DOE's Blueprint for Career Preparation. Monies from this grant were used to support a career preparation program and technology enhancement. The school has also received DOE Technology Grant funds of about $20,000 per year for the last four years (except for 1994-95). Local funding has been provided by a quarter mil ad valorem tax increase, with the funds divided among all schools in the district based on FTE. Vernon High School received about $21,000 from this source in 1994-95. The school board has specified that these monies must be used for technology enhancement, including technology training.
DECISION-MAKING	Vernon High School is a site-based management school. The principal reported that whether Blueprint 2000 existed or not, staff would be involved in the decision-making process.

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VERNON HIGH SCHOOL PROFILE

IMPACT OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES ON STUDENTS

School Improvement Cited	Examples of Initiatives	Description and Impact of Initiatives	Relationship to BP 2000 Goals
Improved Student Performance	Block Scheduling	The school initiated block scheduling five years ago (1990), and there is a strong consensus about the positive role it has played in student performance. The block schedule is set up so that each Monday is a 6-period day used as a preview day of the week's work. On Tuesdays and Thursdays there are three 100-minute blocks for three classes. On Wednesdays and Fridays there are also three 100-minute blocks for another three classes. The principal reports that after the implementation of block scheduling, the number of students on the A/B honor roll increased by approximately 30% and disciplinary referrals dropped by one-half. Teacher and student morale has increased because teachers feel that they have more time to provide in-depth instruction and students feel that they have more time to learn. Also, the principal perceived that the number of students failing classes has dropped, but did not have specific information on numbers.	Goal 3 (continued)

School Improvement Cited	Examples of Initiatives	Description and Impact of Initiatives	Relationship to BP 2000 Goals
Increased Technological Skills of Students and Teachers	Various Strategies Including: ■ Using computers as part of classroom instruction; ■ Technology training program for teachers and students; and ■ Providing access to external networks.	The provision of computers in every classroom at Vernon High School gives teachers the opportunity to integrate computer-based instruction throughout the curriculum. Students have the opportunity to participate in "hands-on" experiences using new technological equipment and are provided alternative methods of demonstrating what they have learned. For example, journalism students use the computer to produce the school yearbook and newsletter. Through technology funding, many teachers have had training opportunities. Due to students' increased interest in technology, the school has also established an informal training program wherein knowledgeable students provide training for other students and teachers. Vernon High School used technology enhancement funds to provide access to external networks such as FIRN and the Internet. The principal perceives that student grades are improving because students enjoy working with computers and technology improves students' attitudes toward learning.	Goal 3 (continued)

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School Improvement Cited	Examples of Initiatives	Description and Impact of Initiatives	Relationship to BP 2000 Goals
Increased Career Awareness	Various Strategies Including: ■ Career Cluster Program; ■ Creation of a Career Center; ■ Teacher as Advisor (TAP) Program; and ■ Business Partnership Program.	The Career Cluster program is a coordinated effort among teachers and staff to encourage students, starting in the 9th grade, to explore and plan for a variety of career options, including college, vocational school, and the business community. The Career Center, staffed by parent volunteers, was started in 1994 to support the Career Cluster program. The lab includes information about post-secondary/career opportunities and computer software programs for career assessment, ACT/SAT preparation, and student financial aid options. The Teacher as Advisor Program (TAP) works with students in a variety of ways, including career counseling. For example, each 9th grade TAP student, with the assistance of an advisor, develops a folder that evolves throughout high school as the student's career planning guide. The Business Partnership Program was initiated in 1994 to get businesses involved in supporting the Career Cluster Program and, when possible, places interested students in a business for a few hours weekly as unpaid observers/learners. Although an evaluation plan was not yet in place to document program results, both the principal and teachers indicated that one positive result of increased career counseling efforts has been greater cooperation with Washington-Holmes Technical Center.	Goal 2

WASHINGTON-HOLMES TECHNICAL CENTER PROFILE

SCHOOL DESCRIPTION	
SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS, AS IDENTIFIED BY STAKEHOLDERS	Stakeholders identified certain school characteristics which should be considered in examining improvement initiatives at the school. These characteristics include: ■ The Technical Center is located in a rural community and serves a variety of populations including students from surrounding high schools and adults; ■ The Center serves a large area, i.e., Washington and Holmes counties; therefore, extensive travel time and lack of student transportation creates a problem; ■ A number of the Center's high school students come from single-parent families and serve as sitters for their siblings while the parent works. According to the director, this responsibility often interferes with a student's program of studies; and ■ Many of the students are adults with other financial and family responsibilities. Conflicts with other commitments may affect a student's ability to complete a program of study.
NUMBER OF STUDENTS AND TEACHERS	■ 772 full time equivalent students ■ Approximately 3,100 students in 1994-95 (full and part-time) ■ 38 full-time teachers The school also has 27 part-time teachers.

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WASHINGTON-HOLMES TECHNICAL CENTER PROFILE

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS	
NAME OF GROUP FUNCTIONING AS SAC	District Advisory Council (See beginning of School Profiles for description.)
INVOLVEMENT OF SCHOOL STAFF	The Center is a site-based management school. The principal reported that although the school improvement team, composed entirely of teachers, is primarily responsible for conducting needs assessments and writing the school improvement plan, every faculty member is involved in developing the final plan. When developing the 1994-95 plan, the faculty divided into seven teams; each group addressed an area where improvement is needed (e.g., retention, placement, follow-up, completion rates).

WASHINGTON-HOLMES TECHNICAL CENTER PROFILE

PERCEPTIONS ON SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROCESS	
MOST POSITIVE CONTRIBUTIONS OF BLUEPRINT 2000	■ Served as a catalyst for school improvement; ■ Reinforced the teamwork concept to the campus; and ■ Made the Center more aware of students' needs and curriculum needs.
NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF BLUEPRINT 2000	■ Perception that Blueprint 2000 ignored the vocational level of education; and ■ Additional time spent in meetings, completing school improvement reports, and justifying requests results in taking too much time away from teaching students. The school hired substitutes for two days to fill in for teachers involved in writing the school improvement plan.
FACTORS THAT HAVE HELPED THE SCHOOL IMPROVE	■ Support of school administration; ■ Teacher inservice, providing teachers opportunities to share ideas; ■ Teamwork approach by teachers; and ■ Teachers' acceptance of Blueprint 2000 as a catalyst for change.
FACTORS THAT HAVE HINDERED SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT	■ Lack of community involvement in school improvement; ■ Time spent on preparing reports and in meeting after regular school hours to plan and implement Blueprint 2000; and ■ DOE school improvement documents do not apply to the vocational education model.

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WASHINGTON-HOLMES TECHNICAL CENTER PROFILE

1994-95 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	
STATE GOALS INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	■ Goal 2 (Graduation Rate and Readiness for Postsecondary Education and Employment); ■ Goal 3 (Student Performance); ■ Goal 4 (Learning Environment); ■ Goal 5 (School Safety); ■ Goal 6 (Teachers and Staff); and ■ Goal 7 (Adult Literacy).
OBJECTIVES INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	The 1994-95 school improvement plan included 11 specific improvement objectives in the following categories: ■ Improve career preparedness; ■ Improve quality of school experience for students; ■ Improve multicultural awareness, interaction, and cooperation; ■ Reduce incidence of violence, substance abuse, vandalism, etc.; ■ Improve adult literacy; ■ Increase problem solving, critical thinking, etc.; ■ Improve student responsibility, cooperativeness, maturity, adjustments, and social skills; ■ Increase graduation rate; and ■ Increase training or inservice for teachers/staff.
	(continued)

WASHINGTON-HOLMES TECHNICAL CENTER PROFILE

1994-95 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	
STRATEGIES INCLUDED IN THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN	The 1994-95 school improvement plan included 37 school improvement strategies or activities in the following general areas: ■ Set up special academic sessions; ■ Tutorial activities; ■ Agreement/cooperation with other agencies; publications/information dissemination; ■ Testing of students for placement/placement of students; utilize integrated instruction approach/block scheduling; ■ Teacher/staff training; ■ Planning, exploring, and assessing options; develop and/or conduct surveys; needs identification/assessment activities; and ■ Develop incentives and/or academic recognition activities; peer counseling/peer groups.
ADEQUATE PROGRESS AND EVALUATION	The plan includes both a description of how the school will determine adequate progress and methods of evaluation.
TRENDS IN PLANS	The 1995-96 school improvement plan is more focused than the 1993-94 and 1994-95 school improvement plans. For example, the 1993-94 and 1994-95 plans included six of the seven state education goals (excluding Goal 1 - School Readiness), while the 1995-96 plan focuses on Goal 2 (Graduation Rate and Readiness for Postsecondary Education and Employment), Goal 4 (Learning Environment), and Goal 7 (Adult Literacy). Additionally,the 1994-95 and 1995-96 school improvement plans included definitions of adequate progress, whereas the 1993-94 plan did not.

WASHINGTON-HOLMES TECHNICAL CENTER PROFILE

IMPACT OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES ON SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION	
WAIVERS	None requested.
RESOURCE ALLOCATION	The director reported that the changes in resource allocation procedures affecting the Center are not necessarily a result of Blueprint 2000. For the 1994-95 school year, the district funded the Center based on its FTE count and provided personnel costs, indirect costs, and equipment/supplies. However, for the 1995-96 school year, the district provided partial funding based on the Center's FTE earnings. According to the director, this resulted in a reduction of personnel (by 11) and approximately $500,000 in funding. He perceives that he has flexibility in resource allocation and receives more input from faculty members on budget issues (e.g., equipment/supplies) since the implementation of Blueprint 2000.
FUNDS	During the 1994-95 school year, the Center received $3,179 from the district for teacher training technology changes and $42,397 from a quarter mill tax increase for technology. The center also received a $75,000 grant for the establishment of an Adult Literacy Center in 1994-95 and a $75,000 performance-based grant to continue Adult Literacy for 1995-96. An Adult Education Grant was received from the Department of Education in the amount of $45,901. The center also received Carl Perkins Vocational Funds in the following amounts: $151,705 (Post-secondary); $41,332 (Secondary); $5,856 (Consumer Homemaking); and $41,901 (Project Reward).
DECISION-MAKING	The Center is a site-based management school. The school improvement team (SIT), composed of teachers, is responsible for writing the school improvement plan. The principal reported that whether Blueprint 2000 existed or not, the faculty would be involved in the decision-making process at the Center. The faculty serve on committees responsible for various management areas (e.g., budgetary, public relations, planning, safety).

WASHINGTON-HOLMES TECHNICAL CENTER PROFILE

IMPACT OF SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES ON STUDENTS

School Improvement Cited	Examples of Initiatives	Description and Impact of Initiatives	Relationship to BP 2000 Goals
Improved Classroom Behavior/Participation	Classroom Management Program	The Center implemented classroom management strategies to address the problems they were experiencing in keeping students occupied for a six-hour program period. Instructors received in-service training in classroom management during the 1994-95 preplanning period and began implementing additional strategies to improve classroom management so that students were more motivated to stay in class and on task. Teachers observe that behavior has improved (e.g., students are no longer loitering between classes). Although teachers believe the changes may be reflected in a decrease in the drop-out rate during the 1994-95 school year period, no evidence was provided to support this perception or the relationship between the program efforts and improved attendance. No other documentation of evaluation procedures was provided.	Goals 3, 4
Increased Student Enrollment	Strategies Referenced Include: ■ Media Blitz; and ■ Open House for Community Members.	The Center conducted a media information campaign and held an Open House during the 1994-95 school year to heighten the community's awareness of the school's services, to provide information about the programs offered by the Center, and to reduce the stigma often associated with vocational education. The school's FTE count was extremely low prior to this concerted effort to make the community and school board members more aware of the programs provided by the Center. Following these marketing efforts, student enrollment increased in February and continued to increase in June and July. These increases accounted for the district earning at least $442,000 more than it would have if the student enrollment for February and June had stayed the same as for July and October 1994.	Goal 4 (continued)

WASHINGTON-HOLMES TECHNICAL CENTER PROFILE

School Improvement Cited	Examples of Initiatives	Description and Impact of Initiatives	Relationship to BP 2000 Goals
Increased Adult Literacy	Adult Literacy Center	During the 1994-95 and 1995-96 school years, the Center received a $75,000 Literacy Center Grant from the Department of Education to help establish its Adult Literacy Center. The purpose of the Center is to identify, contact, counsel, and refer persons lacking a high school diploma or basic literacy skills to appropriate public or private agencies for support services. The Center will also help provide the following to the educationally deprived: G.E.D. instruction, job placement, vocational training, child care, transportation, English for Speakers of Other Languages (E.S.O.L.) instruction, individual counseling, health screening, and career counseling. The program is in its beginning stages; therefore, it may be too soon to determine its impact on improving adult literacy. However, administrators indicated that the grant obtained to operate the Adult Literacy Center is a performance-based contract and includes several benchmarks: identify and contact 100 potential adult education students; counsel 60 clients to assess education and economic needs; refer 60 clients to identified support services; conduct one Literacy Center Improvement Council meeting; and participate in a minimum of one DOE sponsored training/meeting.	Goal 7